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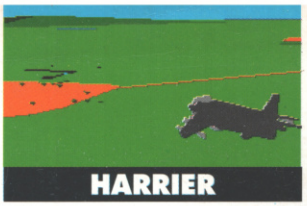

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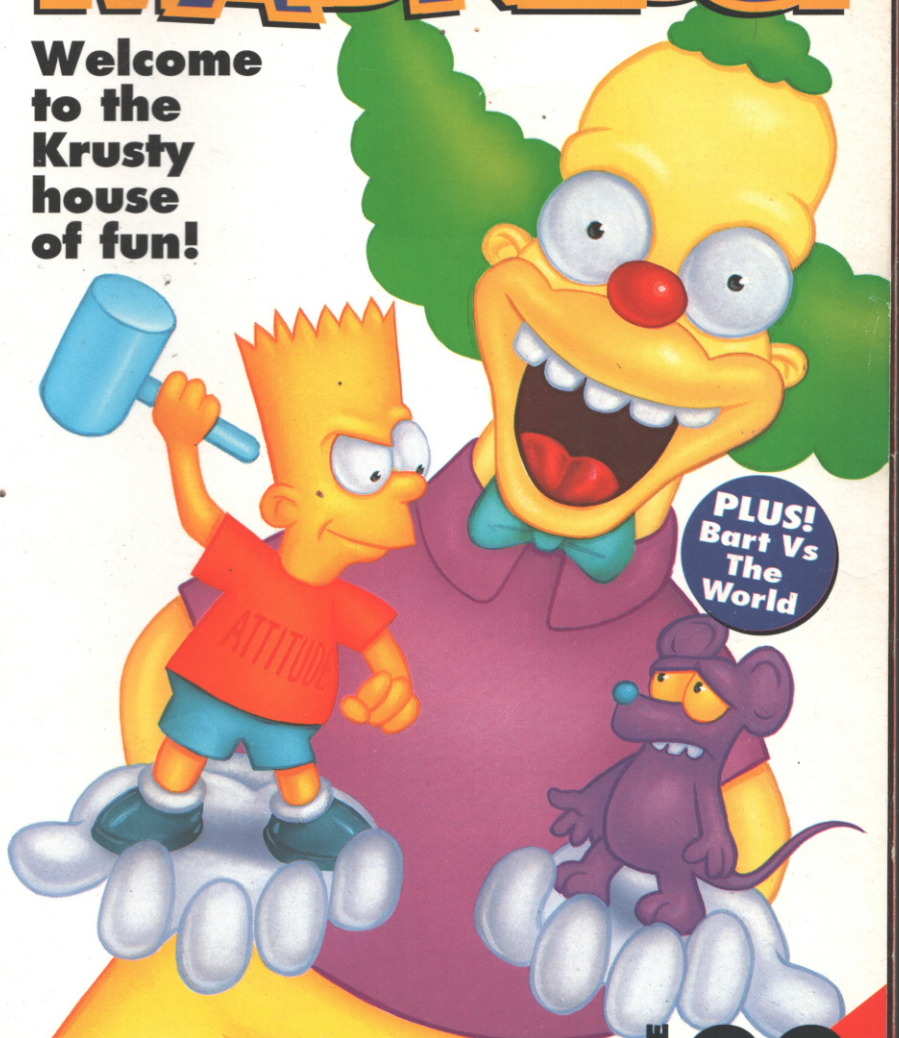

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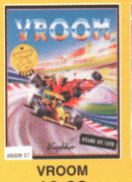

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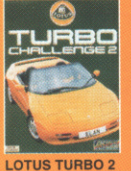

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AMIGA POWER

ISSUE 22 FEBRUARY 1993

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LISA WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'Why are you all so horrible to me?'

STUART WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'It's not my department, guv.'

TIM T WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'Gurt lush mint jam.'

MARK W WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'Thanks, but I already KNOW I'm tall.'

JACQUIE WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'Sorry Old Orleans, but it'll never happen again.'

MARK WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'For us, these are the days.'

TIM WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY:
'Some people would pay a lot of money for that.'

AMIGA POWER comes to you from Future Publishing, home of Amiga Format, ST Format, Amiga Shopper, Mega, Super Play, Your Sinclair, Commodore Format, Amstrad Action, Sega Power, Total, and Games Master magazine.

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10 TRUE STORIES
Hot *Kick Off 3* news, and not a single mention of *Sensible Soccer*. Maybe.

14 THE GALLUP CHARTS
Am I allowed to do a 'Giddyup, woa boy' joke, or has that already been done?

16 THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME
Famous yellow child Bart Simpson rubs shoulders with science fiction characters, as *Dune II*, *Captive 2* and *Amber Star 2* go through their growing pains.

52 BACK ISSUES/ MAIL ORDER
They're selling like hot cakes (almost) so now's an ideal time to grab those steaming home-cooked slices of yesteryear.Yummy!

55 COMPLETE CONTROL
Enchantia, *Indiana Jones* and *Kyrandia* get the full solution treatment, and teen heart throb Jonathan Davies solves all your angst problems. What a great guy, huh?

80 THE A-Z OF ARCADE GAMES
Street Fighter II is the most recent coin-op to reach the home market, but not the first. So what were the other ones like?

94 A CLONE AGAIN, OR...?
There's a lot of eerily similar games out there. Is this coincidence or are darker forces at work? The AP jury decides.

100 DO THE WRITE THING
It's the bit where we print your well thought out views, and then appear clever by having a laugh at your expense. It's cruel, but so's life.

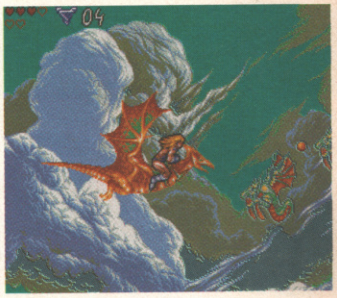
108 THE BOTTOM LINE
The best, the only, the definitive list of Amiga games, hot or not.

112 SUBSCRIBE TO AMIGA POWER
Your chance to get the 'Power' delivered to your door. Oh go on. Please. Pleasy, pleasy, pleasy.

114 THE RIGHT PROFILE
Second up in our occasional series is David Braben, author of *Elite* and the soon to be released sequel *Frontier*. What will it be like, what's his ideal epitaph and why is his hero a dead Victorian train dude? All these answers and more.

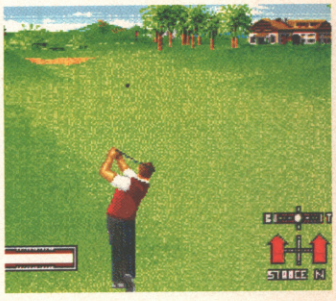
GAMES OF THE MO

CHAOS ENGINE
Based very loosely on an old moped, only different, and set in Victorian times. Page 27



LIONHEART
The warrior with the strength of an ox and the heart of a lion. It's *Oxstrength*. Page 30

STREET FIGHTER II
The best beat-'em-up ever to hit the Amiga, or just a load of over-hyped tat? Page 34



NICK FALDO
You, Brucey, Tarby and Ronny strut the fairway. How many's that? Fore! Page 38

HISTORY LINE
Tommy and Jerry scrap it out on Flanders fields, but it was a long way to Tipperary. Page 44

ALIEN3
If the cubed root of 27 is three, then what's the cubed root of alien then? Page 46

WIN!
A DIY BITMAP BROTHERS KIT
Page 79

OVER 300
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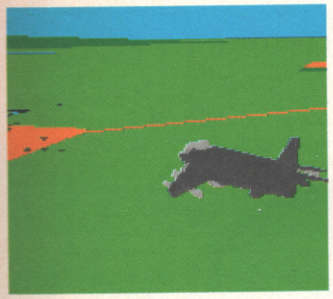
E MONTH



AV 8B HARRIER
They're back, those tough little dogs with shaggy hair, no, hold on a minute... Page 32

KRUSTY'S FUN HOUSE
Full of snakes, teeming with rats and fatal traps – that doesn't sound fun. Page 40

DARKSEED
Sci-fi writer Mike Dawson finding that truth can be stranger than fiction. Page 48

FREE POSTER
You've been waiting all year for the new *Lemmings* game, and now you've got a year's worth of the cuties. Cavemen lemmings, circus lemmings, and even the AMIGA POWER on-sale dates. What more could you need?

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NEXT MONTH...
February 11th, that's the date to look forward to. It's the big A1200 ish, with everything you've always wanted to know about it but were too afraid to ask.

There's so much packed in to your cover disk this month that we had to spoon feed it the last few mouthfulls and wouldn't let it leave the table until it finished. It cried, it moaned, but we still stuffed the little bleeder with two amazing demos and an entire game. Incredible!

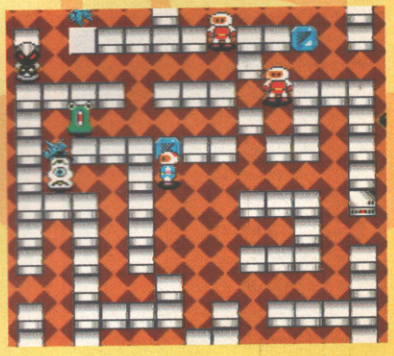
disk 22

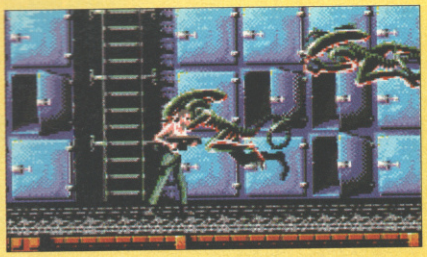
AND THIS IS DISK 22

ARABIAN NIGHTS
1001 flying carpet related jokes have been whizzing through our heads to accompany this great new Krisalis demo, and not one of them is funny.

Anyway, in *Arabian Nights* you get to play Sinbad Jr, a cute kid with a mission – so see if you can guide him through the two mini levels we've got for your turkish delight.

ATOM SMASHER
We said we'd bring you the very best of PD, and that's exactly what we've got here. This 50 level stormer has nothing to do with atoms but lots of smashing, and it plays like a two player *Pengo*. And – hey! – Madonna's in there too. Strange that.





ALIEN3
Pulse rifle at the ready, razors set on a number one skinhead, get xenophobic and kick alien butt in this full level demo from Acclaim.

GOT A FAULTY DISK?
● Oh no! Are you sure? Before you go any further try the procedures described in the panel over the page. If, after all that, you *do* have disk problems, simply place it in an envelope, along with an SAE and an explanatory letter, and return it NOT TO THE AP OFFICE but to: AMIGA POWER Disk Returns 22, Diskcopy Labs, Unit 2+3 Omega Technology Centre, Drayton Fields, Drayton, NN1 1FR.

disk 22

YOUR DISK AND YOU

READ THIS BIT FIRST OR NO ONE WILL TAKE ANY NOTICE OF YOU WHEN YOU SAY THAT YOUR DISK DOESN'T WORK.

- *Arabian Nights* and *Alien*^{3} are one meg only. Um, sorry.
- To load any of the games, all you have to do is switch off your machine, insert the disk, and switch your machine back on again.
- An options menu will appear. Simply follow the instructions to load the game of your choice.
- Just to be on the safe side, though, the on-screen instructions say that you should press the appropriate function key to make your selection.
- It really is that simple.
- You'll have to reset your machine in order to play one of the other demos. When you do so, simply follow the instructions above.
- Remember to keep the disk you are playing your game from in the drive at all times. And remember – switching the machine off for 20 seconds or so before loading a new program will help prevent disks being infected by stray viruses.
- Have a good time.

OH NO! SOMETHING WENT WRONG!

- Are you sure?
- Try all that stuff again, making sure you've disconnected any peripherals the program might not 'like'.
- If your disk fails to load, then pop it in a padded envelope, along with a letter explaining the problem, to:
  AMIGA POWER Disk 22 Returns,
  Diskcopy Labs
  Unit 2+3
  Omega Technology Centre
  Drayton Fields
  Drayton
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- We really hoping you're reading this bit, because it's quite important: please don't send your disks to us at the AMIGA POWER office. We really don't know how to fix dodgy disks. We've tried, we really have, but we're just crap at it. So send it Discopy Labs. Please.

ARABIAN N

Publisher: Krisalis

We said it looked good in last month's Things to Come feature, and now here it is... almost. Two storming levels of arabian based fun and frolics featuring that young rapscallion of a ragamuffin Sinbad Jr. Locked up, and down on your luck you've got to break out your cell and scoot out of the evil ruler's dungeon, but how? We're not going to tell you because the whole point of playing is for you to find that out.

A FEW HINTS? GO ON THEN

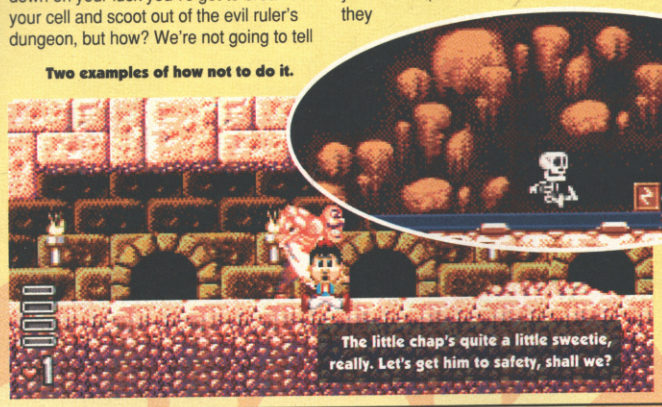
See that box on the floor? Run over to it then grab the spinning frisbee thing. Press the 'Space' bar and you'll get the inventory box, showing that as well as your sword (don't they search prisoners anymore?) you've got a key. Escape time!

Your freedom depends on the prisoner at the end of the corridor, and your quest is helped enormously by finding all the hidden rooms that are, well, hidden. Try pulling down and pressing fire when you're near likely-looking arches – there're loads of them about. Oh yeah, the snake's important as well.

Out of the dungeon and you're into the mine cart race. Avoid the magnets (or lose your wheels, so don't say we didn't warn you) and try to stay in as you bounce along. Or you can always do what we did and run the length of the track following the cart.

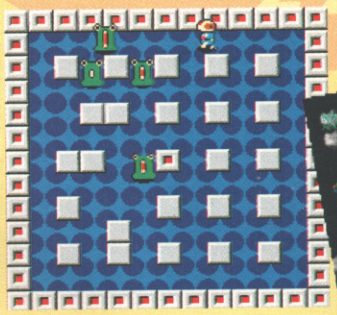
Play and enjoy, and if these levels leave you foaming at the mouth and demanding more, then be appreciative that we were kind enough to let you have

Two examples of how not to do it.



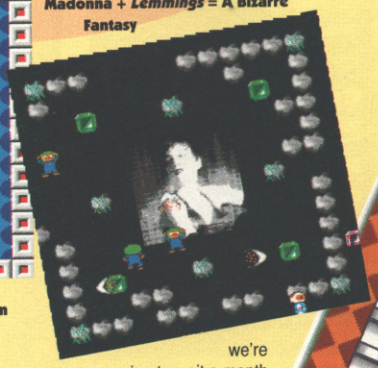
The little chap's quite a little sweetie, really. Let's get him to safety, shall we?

ATOM SM A



Attack of the killer greeny meanies from beyond space.

Madonna + *Lemmings* = A Bizarre Fantasy



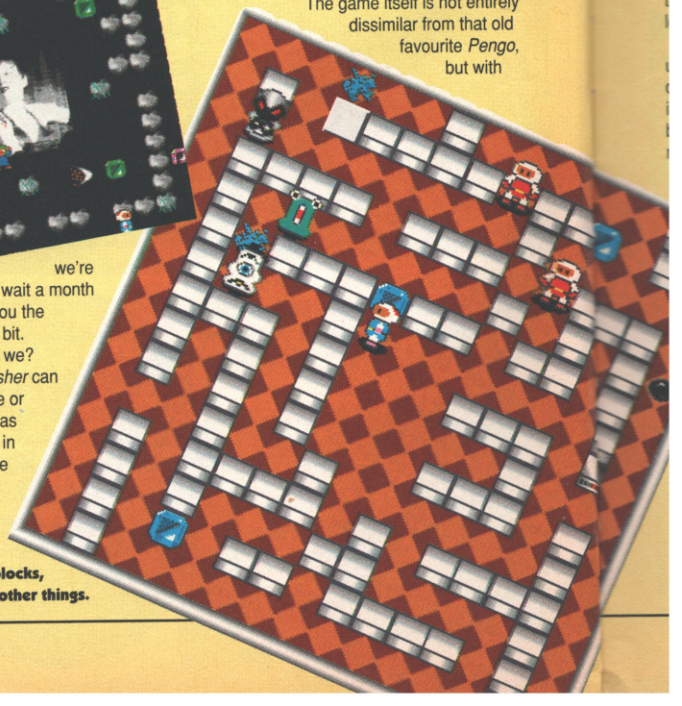
What game features Madonna, exploding lemmings, green meanies, the chap from *Dynablaster*, fridges and all sorts of other weird stuff? Incredibly not only does this game exist, but you're the proud owner of it. 'Blimey,' I hear you cry, 'that sounds a good laugh, but how do I play it?' Pay attention and learn something.

There's 50 levels of this little beauty, and should you ever tire of them, there's even a level editor where you can create your own. We reckon that you've had more than enough goodies this month so we're going to wait a month before we give you the password to this bit. Heartless, aren't we?

Atom Smasher can be played by one or two players, but as with most things in life, it's tons more fun if you do it with a friend. You've got two options – a dual game or the team game, but the only difference is that the score's shared in the team game and individual in the other option.

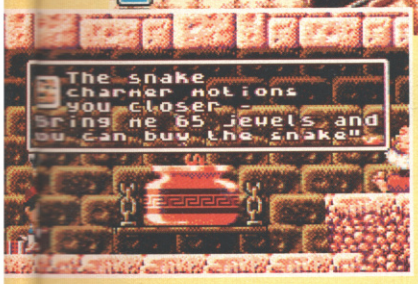
The game itself is not entirely dissimilar from that old favourite *Pengo*, but with

Some blocks, and other things.



NIGHTS

Shades of Indy Jones in the mine cart sequence

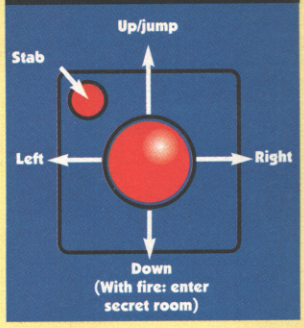


Tell us, would you buy a second-hand snake from this man?

this taster, the rest of the world has to wait a few more weeks to get their hands on this.

You lucky, lucky people. ●

CONTROLS

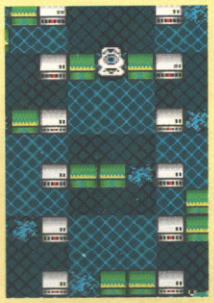


ASHER

various bits of *Dynablaster* and even *Smash TV* thrown in. You run your little guy around the screen and try and flatten the baddies by sliding blocks over them, kill them all and it's onto the next level. Simple? Yes. Easy? Never.

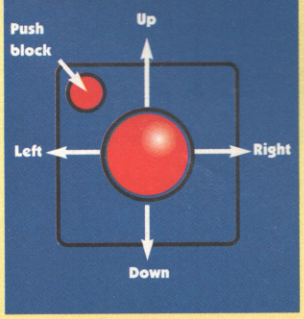
For one thing every time you push up against a block that can't move in the direction you want it, it melts away. This is great when you're escaping a baddy, but after a bit you find that there isn't too much left that you can throw or hide behind. Also in two player mode you've got to look out for your so-called friend, who stands a good chance of killing you by either mistake or malice.

There are various power ups to help you in your quest of genocide, the best one being the bomb, which takes out anything moving and nasty that happens to be on the screen at the time. There's also a time freeze, so you can pick off the static bad guys at your leisure, and a temporary invincibility which makes you flash and also (surprise, surprise) temporarily invincible. When you're flashing the best thing to do is just run at the bad guys as they'll die when you touch them. ●



Err, more blocks and, um, things. And a one-eyed nasty.

CONTROLS

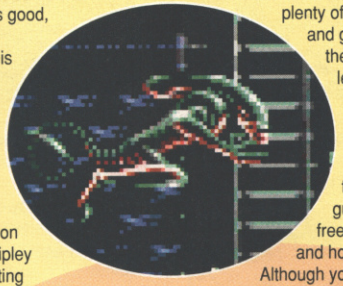


ALIEN 3

Publisher: Acclaim

Let's face it, the film was a bit of a duffer, wasn't it? It blew its credibility in the first three minutes by killing off everyone from Aliens. Thankfully for the game playing public, this version doesn't make any mistakes, like following the film plot or anything. And how can we tell? Because the game's good, that's how.

What we have here is a single element from the movie (Ripley's hair cut) combined with all the good ideas from Aliens. Armed to the teeth (but there were no guns on the prison planet) Ripley dashes around wasting thousands of aliens (but there was only one in the film) while at the same time rescuing prisoners who're all gunked up in some kind of secreted resin. But secreted from what?



The options screen lets you choose to play with or without the music (choose with, it's worth it) and also a one or two button joystick. The two button option uses the second one for jump, which makes clearing the fans a bit easier,.

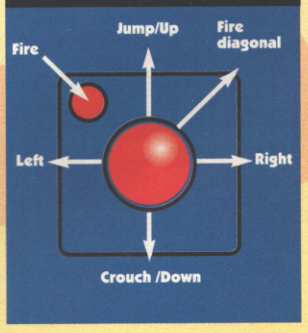
You start on the planet surface and you've got five minutes (displayed at the top of the screen) to rescue eight prisoners and get the hell out. The motion tracker in the top right corner gives you warning of impending nasties and you really need it, these nasties are fast. It's a reassuring feature to have, which makes it all the more of a loss when the batteries pack up after about two minutes and you start to feel all lonely.

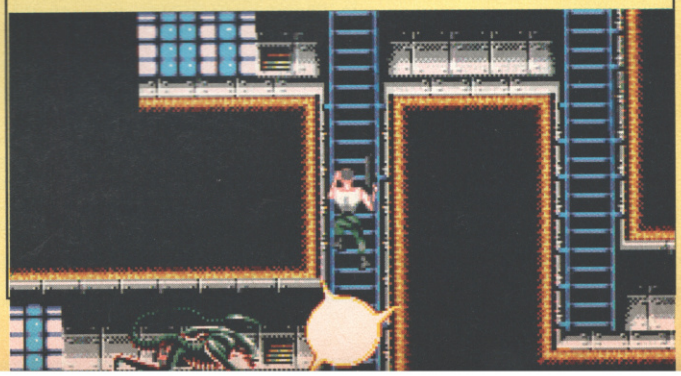
Ripley's got an obscene amount of weaponry, and she's not afraid to use it. The space bar toggles grenades, flame thrower, pulse rifle and grenade launcher, and you'll find that they've all got good and bad points. The grenade launcher for instance blows the aliens and doors away in a single shot, but takes a second or so to reload, and while the rifle may seem weedy, there's plenty of ammo and Ripley can fire as she runs around. Dotted around the level is fuel for the flame thrower, a med pack and plenty of caseless ammo and grenades, and since there's just the one level on this demo you should feel free to fire it all off just for the hell of it. At some point during the gratuitous gunplay, you should free all the prisoners and hoof it out of the exit.

Although you might find it earlier in the game, it only opens after you've released the last prisoner, so be warned, you've got to free them all, ugly and frighteningly similar though they are, or you're toast.

And, er, that's it. ●

CONTROLS





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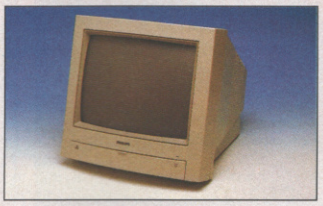

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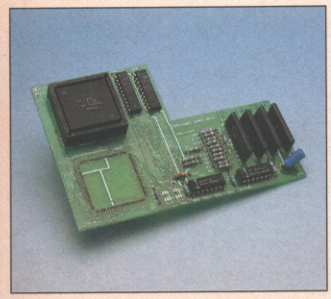

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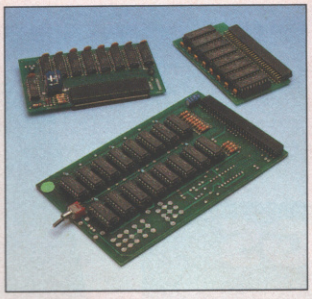

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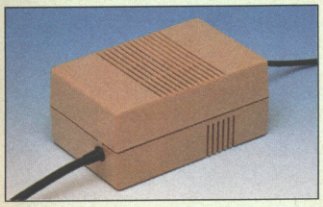

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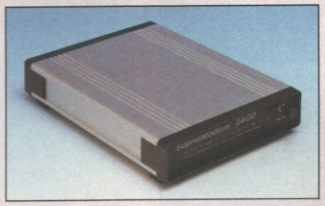

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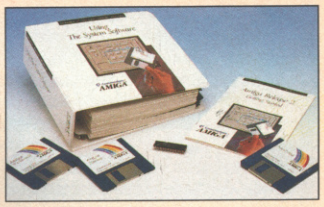

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TRUE STORIES

GREETINGS

Hello, good day and welcome to another lovingly created issue of AMIGA POWER. Yeah, so you're wondering why I'm here again, mug shot and all. Just what have I got to say this month? Well, take a look through this here issue (after you've stuck your fabulous *Lemmings 2* wallplanner up, that is) and you'll find lots to keep you going for the next four weeks.

The first bit we're particularly proud of is our coverdisk – once again we've managed to squeeze three slices of playability onto one disk. Where other mags give you scrappy non-playable rolling demos or disks with minuscule chunks of games, AMIGA POWER serves up great big spoonfuls of top-notch stuff. This month, of particular note is *Atom Smasher*, an utterly wonderful slice of PD which you won't have seen anywhere before. Taking its cue from *Dyna Blaster*, we're confident you'll be voting for this one in next year's Readers' Top 100.

Watch out also for the new AMIGA POWER Complete Control Hotlines. Tips over the phone have been done before, but never quite like this. For starters each line is dedicated to one particular game. If you don't need the tips, then you needn't phone. The second point is that all tips last only three minutes, which at off-peak times means that the entire call will cost you less than a pound. Plus, three minutes of tips means exactly that – no waffle, just solid tipping on the game you want to hear about. Do write and let us know what you think – the Hotlines are here for you after all.

But back to the issue, and... aww, you don't need me to tell you all about it, do you? Go ahead and read it for yourself, and enjoy. And remember, just like BT, it's you we answer to, so if you've got any comments get writing. Cheers.

KICK OFF 3 IS DEAD, LONG LIVE *GOAL!*

Shock news of the month is that *Kick Off 3* will not be getting a release. Acclaimed footy fanatic and Amiga programmer Dino Dini has decided to go with first division team Virgin for his latest creation, and change the game's title to *Goal!* in the process.

"It's not quite Lazio signing Gascoigne but probably the industry equivalent," noted Virgin MD Tim Chaney sagely. Unfortunately nobody at AP (except Stuart) understood the metaphor, but what the hell.

Anco may opt to release product under the *Kick Off* label in future, but Dino will be concentrating solely on product for Virgin from now on.

Dino said of the transfer: "I'm looking forward to this new and exciting relationship. Virgin is a company I've long admired and I'm delighted that *Goal!* has been acquired by them. I believe they'll do for soccer what they've done so effectively for snooker."

We hope to bring you a preview of *Goal!* next month, but expect to see the finished thing sometime in Spring. And who knows, a partnership between Dino and Archer could well happen somewhere down the line. Now that would be really bizarre.

RUSHES

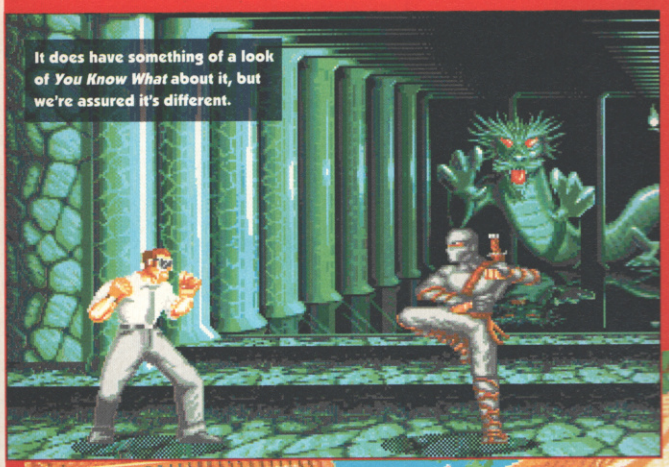
Here's where we give you just a brief taste of what will be, via a few choice screen shots from forthcoming games. If they're not ready for a full-blown preview or if they've already been featured but have undergone further changes, then you'll find 'em here.

Coming very soon from Grandslam, *Myra – Legend Of Darkness*

***Myra* sees Grandslam enter dangerous role-playing territory.**

After the groovy *Caesar*, Impressions are about to release *Air Commander*.

TEAM 17'S BLOW OUT



It does have something of a look of *You Know What* about it, but we're assured it's different.

Street Fighter who? That's the message from *Body Blows*, the next biggie from Team 17. That said, there's no denying where the inspiration for this one came from. The choice of characters, the simple one-on-one action, even the individual special moves – *Body Blows* is obviously heavily influenced by the coin-op king of beat-'em-ups.

But, whereas *Street Fighter II* programming team Creative Materials have been attempting to recreate the arcade smash as exactly as possible on the Amiga, Team 17 have no licence to worry about. They've been free to take the ideas from the arcade game, and approach things in a more Amiga-friendly way. The screens you see here certainly look impressive, and Team 17 are usually reliable in the technical department. But it's early days yet, and everything will hinge on the smoothness of the action and on the control system. Expect to find out whether *Body Blows* really is a rival for *Street Fighter II* in two or three months time.

It looks as if some of the movement will be almost balletic.

And the characters are a bit more individual and interesting-looking.

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Oops – one thing we forgot to mention in our review of *Prince Of Persia* on budget last month was that it's not A500P or A600, or even A1200 compatible. Meanwhile, for more information on just what is and isn't A1200-friendly, watch out next month for our complete guide to the A1200 in 1993.

IT'S BY JR HARTLEY...

How many times have you read an old copy of AMIGA POWER and thought 'I'd like that game' only to find that the game's no longer available in the shops? Well, ever happy to solve any consumer-based problems, we can now offer a solution. Richard Gandy of Computer Cavern boasts the largest stock of back catalogue games anywhere, and also the complete range of CDTV titles. He also runs a mail order service, so you can phone him up and call his bluff on any title going back the days of the Vic 20. See whether he can fit you out with an aging classic and give him a call on 0628 891 101.

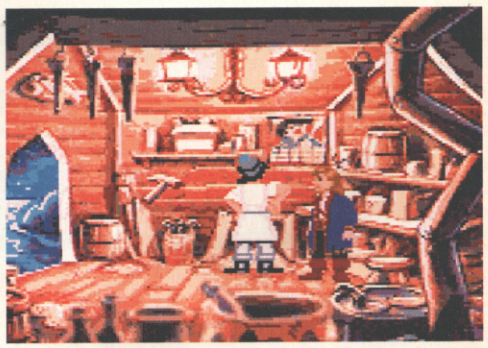
EIGHT-LEGGED GROOVE MACHINE

One of Gilbert's earlier offerings.

***Monkey Island* man moves! Ron Gilbert has left LucasArts, to set up Humongous Entertainment (to be distributed by Electronic Arts).**

The first release on the new label being *Day Of The Tentacle* – sequel to the aging, but much-loved *Maniac Mansion*. This and other Humongous releases will be using the SCUMM adventure system as pioneered in *The Secret Of Monkey Island*, although Lucasfilm will continue to utilise the system in their games too.

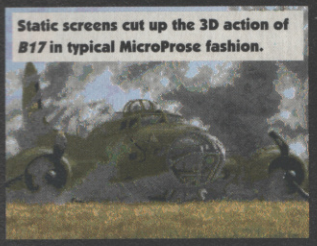
After *Day Of The Tentacle*, Humongous will be put all their effort into *Putt Putt Goes To The Parade* – a children's graphic adventure. The only possible black spot is that it's undecided whether Mr Gilbert and friends will be supporting the Amiga with their new endeavours. Fingers crossed.



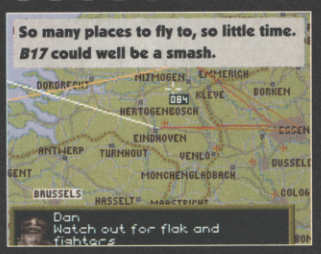
Revamped from an old title, *Air Commander* is looking pretty neat.

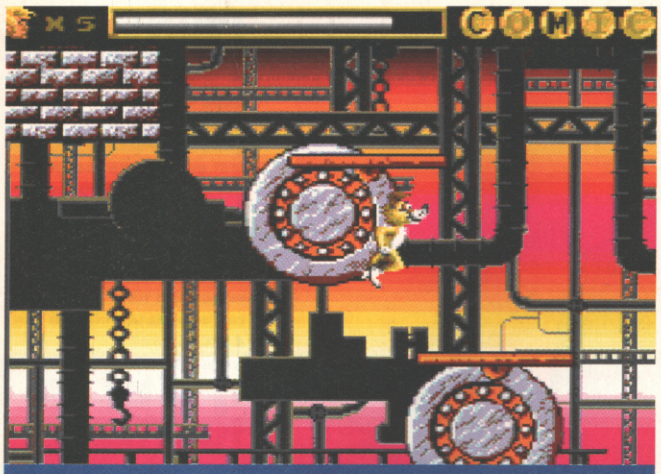
After *Gunship 2000*, MicroProse will be releasing *B17 Flying Fortress*.

Static screens cut up the 3D action of *B17* in typical MicroProse fashion.

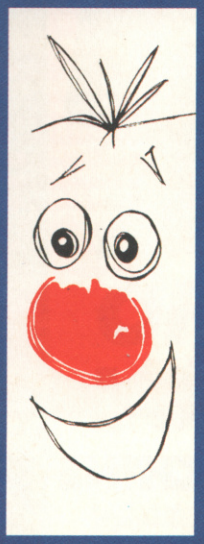


So many places to fly to, so little time. *B17* could well be a smash.





RED NOSE YOU KNOW



Okay, so we've already told you about this one. But we're going to remind you one more time to get involved in the *SleepWalker* money raising activities for Comic Relief on Red Nose day – ie Friday 12th March.

As we told you last time the idea is to raise money by both selling copies of *SleepWalker* to you – The Kids – and to get people sponsoring each other to play it. To register yourself as a Red Nose fundraiser, phone the *SleepWalker* sponsorship line on 081 933 5427. Playing games to raise money – it sounds too good to be true.

Ocean are hoping to raise £500,000 with *SleepWalker* – and with a game as fab looking as this one, they certainly deserve to. Since we last looked at the game various Red Nose-supporting celebrities are being 'included' in the game, plus of course Lenny Henry provides the voices and sound effects, and the ubiquitous red noses make a strong showing in the special bonus levels.

It's not often we actually give our judgment on a game in a preview, but *SleepWalker* looks like being one of the best platformers around. And when it's all in a good cause, you've simply got no reason to not get involved. Of course, you don't have to get people to sponsor you playing *SleepWalker*, but don't forget that for every copy sold £4.32 goes directly to Comic Relief. So get to it – get yourself registered, and get those *SleepWalker* competitions organised. In your school, your college, even your office. Frankly we don't care where, just so long as you do.

HIDDEN AGENDA

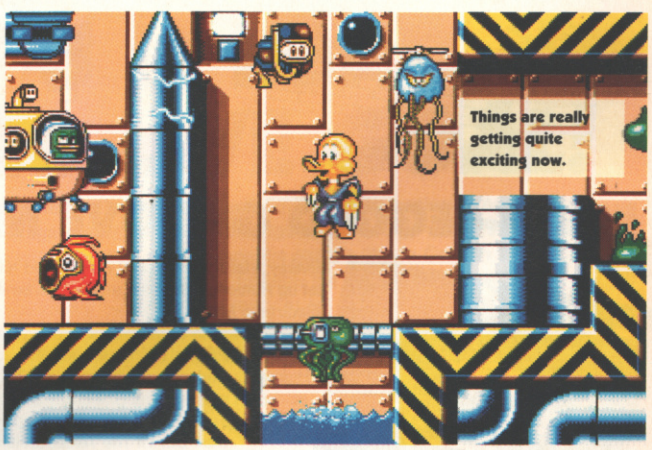
Top PD programmers the Hidden have finally gone commercial, with their first commercial game, *Dong* (as unveiled in our Design A Game winners feature last month), set for release in the new year. This is the team responsible for the classic AMIGA POWER cover disk PD games *Top Secret*, *Puggles* and *Rome* and they are made up of programmer William Bell and designers/artists Craig Howard and Simon Legget.

***Dong* now looks even more duck-like than before.**

How would you like to pay, sir? Just put it on my bill.

In *Dong* you take the part of a Samurai mutant duck that must collect power-crystals and defeat the evil Dick in order to save the universe. It's a console-type platform game including four different themes each with six levels, but perhaps the most innovative feature is the polymorphic tweening of the main character. This enables you to morph *Dong* between mutant duck and, er, just a normal everyday duck in order to lay eggs for special powers. The scrolling runs at an impressive 50 fps (frames per second) and the game has 32 colours on screen.

It certainly looks like a top quality game, and to add to its appeal it will be coming out at a recession friendly £15.99 (hurrah for the Hidden – let's hope other companies follow suit). This looks like the start of a great career for the boys, so those other ex-PD game writers Team 17 better watch out – the Hidden have their sights set on their laurels.



Things are really getting quite exciting now.

AMIGA POWER RECOMMENDS

This month AMIGA POWER recommends that you wrap up well before you go out – it's chilly weather at the moment, doncha know?

WING COMMANDER
(A1200 VERSION MINDSCAPE)

Okay, so the ordinary Amiga version just doesn't cut the mustard – it's miles too slow and jerky – but if you're one of the lucky owners of Commodore's 32-bit baby, then buying this will give you an instant passport to PC Land, that strange and far-off place where texture-mapped 32-colour 3D graphics are something that doesn't even raise an eyebrow. To be honest, the actual game's just a 1992 version of *Star Raiders*, but it's no less amazing for that.

BILL'S TOMATO GAME
(PSYGNOSIS)

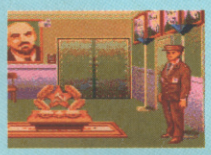
People have tried to imitate *Lemmings* (or tried to imitate its huge success) ever since it came out, but it's just possible that the first really massive puzzle game success to follow in that game's footsteps could be one from the same company. *Bill's Tomato Game* looks lovely (a rare enough thing for a puzzler), but it's the gameplay that really grabs you, with a great mix of mindbending, mouse-twitching and good old-fashioned frustration. And free tomato ketchup, too.

TROLLS
(FLAIR)

We've seem quite a slew of these scrolly, platformy, vaguely *Sonic*-y efforts of late, but this is probably the most stylish one so far. Some really inspired worlds (the snakes and ladders board and the newspaper world are just a couple which spring to mind) made a nice change from Forest Land, Ice Land, Water Land and all the usual tedious old guff you tend to see in this kind of thing. And the frantic, action-heavy gameplay is enough to keep the entertainment level up there with the best of 'em.

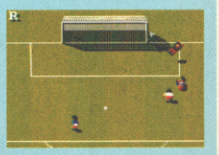
INDIANA JONES
(US GOLD)

Okay, so it comes on enough disks to tile a roof with, and as usual non-hard drive owners would do well to forget they ever heard the name, but get past the mechanics and into the actual game and you're in for another real treat from LucasArts. A great plot, an awesome challenge, a whole load of different ways to tackle your epic task and, of course, the great atmosphere that comes automatically from Indiana Jones all go together to produce an adventure that's a worthy rival to the *Monkey Island* classics.



KGB
(VIRGIN)

You might not have managed to get past the first four words of Tim's review last issue, but if you skipped it you'll have missed out on discovering one of 1992's more original games. You might not expect a game about the ultra-secretive Soviet secret police to be immediately accessible or user-friendly, but this one is and it's all the more tense and exciting for it. It suffers a little from over-linearity, but it's still an atmospheric and seriously gripping political thriller. Give it a try and get yourself ensnared.



SENSIBLE SOCCER 92/93
(RENEGADE)

Did we tell you about this one? No, I'm sorry, I can't keep it up any longer. Last time, honest. But you really ought to have it by now, y'know.

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AMIGA POWER PENGUIN GALLUP CHARTS TOP 100

★★★★★ Exceptional ★★★★★ Nearly there ★★★★ Very good ★★★ Has its moments ★★ Flawed ★ Dire

1 (1) **ALIEN BREED: SPECIAL EDITION** Team 17 £10.99 ★★★★
2 (4) **ZOOL** Gremlin £25.99 ★★★★★
3 (4) **SENSIBLE SOCCER 92/93** Renegade/Mindscape £25.99 ★★★★★
4 (NE) **ARCHER'S POOL** Virgin £25.99 ★★★★
5 (8) **JAMES POND** GBH £7.99 ★★★★
6 (74) **ROAD RASH** Electronic Arts £25.99 ★★★
7 (31) **INDIANA JONES: GRAPHIC ADVENTURE** Kixx XL £14.99 ★★★★★
8 (3) **PINBALL FANTASIES** 21st Century Entertainment £29.99 ★★★★★
9 (39) **TRIVIAL PURSUIT** Hit Squad £7.99 ★★
10 (2) **PUTTY** System 3 £25.99 ★★★★★

11 (NE) **WWF EUROPEAN RAMPAGE TOUR** Ocean £25.99 *
12 (12) **HUMANS** Mirage £29.99 ***
13 (NE) **PREMIER MANAGER** Gremlin £25.99 ****
14 (9) **DIZZY: PRINCE OF THE YOLKFOLK** Code Masters £7.99 ***
15 (50) **NIGEL MANSELL'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP** Gremlin £29.99 ****
16 (NE) **STREET FIGHTER** Kixx £9.99 ****
17 (33) **PRINCE OF PERSIA** Hit Squad £7.99 ****
18 (10) **SPELLBOUND DIZZY** Code Masters £7.99 ***
19 (19) **MONKEY ISLAND 2** US Gold £37.99 *****
20 (5) **CAMPAIGN** Empire £34.99
21 (15) **LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE** GBH £9.99 ***
22 (7) **LOTUS 3: THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE** Gremlin Graphics £25.99 *****
23 (14) **F16 COMBAT PILOT** Action 16 £9.99 ***
24 (NE) **AV8B HARRIER ASSAULT** Domark £34.99 **
25 (75) **FUTURE WARS** Kixx XL £12.99 ***
26 (13) **PANZA KICK BOXING** Kixx £9.99 *
27 (21) **JIMMY WHITES WHIRLWIND SNOOKER** Virgin £29.99 *****
28 (17) **SHOOT 'EM UP KIT** GBH £9.99
29 (80) **MIDWINTER** Kixx XL £12.99 ***
30 (NE) **SHUTTLE** Virgin £30.99 **
31 (22) **CIVILIZATION** MicroProse £34.99 ***
32 (23) **FUN SCHOOL 2 OVER 8s** Hit Squad £7.99 N/A
33 (16) **TEST DRIVE 2** Hit Squad £7.99 **
34 (81) **SANTA'S XMAS CAPER** Zeppelin £7.99
35 (25) **FIRE AND ICE** Renegade £25.99 ****
36 (NE) **FIRST DIVISION MANAGER** Code Masters £7.99 *****
37 (35) **F1GRAND PRIX** MicroProse £34.99 *****
38 (6) **ASSASSIN** Team 17 £25.99 ***
39 (RE) **SWIV** Kixx £9.99 *****
40 (NE) **CURSE OF ENCHANTIA** Core Design £34.99 *****
41 (30) **MAGIC LAND DIZZY** Codemasters £7.99 ***
42 (43) **PGA TOUR PLUS** Electronic Arts £29.99 ***
43 (34) **FUN SCHOOL 2 6-8 YEARS** Hit Squad £7.99 N/A
45 (45) **DREAM TEAM** Ocean £25.99 **
45 (20) **KYRANDIA** Virgin £35.99 *****
46 (27) **SUPERCARS 2** GBH £9.99 ****
47 (64) **LEMMINGS/OH NO MORE LEMMINGS** Psygnosis £29.99 ****
48 (NE) **INDIANA JONES - FATE OF ATLANTIS** US Gold £37.99 **
49 (NE) **BATTLEHAWKS 1942** Kixx XL £14.99 **
50 (NE) **ARCADE FRUIT MACHINE** Zeppelin £29.99
51 (48) **FUN SCHOOL 2 UNDER 6** Hit Squad £7.99
52 (44) **RAINBOW ISLANDS** Hit Squad £7.99 *****
53 (24) **CAPTAIN DYNAMO** Code Masters £7.99 **
54 (29) **GRAHAM TAYLOR SOCCER CHALLENGE** Krisalis £25.99 ****
55 (37) **JACK NICKLAUS GOLF** Hit Squad £7.99 **
56 (41) **FALCON** Action 16 £14.99 ***
57 (42) **FIREFORCE** Ice £25.99 **
58 (36) **CARRIER COMMAND** Kixx £7.99 ****
59 (NE) **SABRE TEAM** Krisalis £25.99 ****
60 (52) **BEHOLDER 2** US Gold £35.99 ****
61 (NE) **ZAK MCKRAKEN** Kixx XL £12.99 ***
62 (51) **BEAST 3** Psygnosis £25.99 ****
63 (46) **JOHN MADDEN** Electronic Arts £29.99 *****
64 (11) **SENSIBLE SOCCER** Renegade/Mindscape £25.99 *****
65 (NE) **SUPERFIGHTERS** Ocean £25.99 ***
66 (47) **COMBAT CLASSIC** Empire £29.99 ****
67 (NE) **TV SPORTS BOXING** Mindscape Classic £14.99 **
68 (32) **LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS** Virgin £30.99 *****
69 (53) **TREASURE ISLAND DIZZY** Code Masters £4.99 ***
70 (NE) **BIGNOSE THE CAVEMAN** Code Masters £7.99
71 (65) **EASY AMOS** Europress Software £34.99 ****
72 (NE) **DR WHO - DALEK ATTACK** Alternative £16.99 *
73 (38) **PRO TENNIS TOUR** Hit Squad £7.99 ***
74 (40) **CHAMP MANAGER** Domark £24.99 ***
75 (63) **THE MANAGER** US Gold £30.99 *
76 (NE) **LEEDS UTD CHAMPIONS** CDS £25.99
77 (54) **A320 AIRBUS** Thalion £35.99 **
78 (69) **ANOTHER WORLD** US Gold £25.99 *****
79 (NE) **FUN SCHOOL: PAINT AND CREATE** Europress Software £25.99
80 (49) **STRIKER** Rage Software £25.99 ***
81 (87) **ULTIMATE GOLF** GBH Gold £9.99 **
82 (55) **MAN UNITED** GBH £7.99 **
83 (NE) **BILL'S TOMATO GAME** Psygnosis £29.99 *****
84 (NE) **COOL WORLD** Ocean £25.99 ****
85 (NE) **NO SECOND PRIZE** Thalion £25.99 ****
86 (66) **GOLDEN AXE** Tronix £9.99 **
87 (NE) **LETHAL WEAPON** Ocean £25.99 ****
88 (72) **PICTIONARY** Hit Squad £7.99 *
89 (98) **FUN SCHOOL: SPELLING FAIR** Europress Software £25.99
90 (67) **TOTAL RECALL** Hit Squad £7.99 *
91 (58) **BUBBLE BOBBLE** Hit Squad £7.99 ****
92 (56) **DUNGEON MASTER/ CHAOS STRIKES BACK** Psygnosis £29.99 ****
93 (88) **KINGS QUEST 5** Sierra Online £34.99 ***
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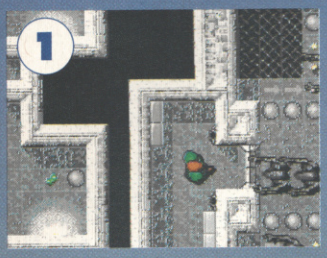
96 (82) **PROJECT X** Team 17 £25.99 ***
97 (78) **FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER** Action 16 £14.99 ****
98 (60) **EMLYN HUGHES INTERNATIONAL SOCCER** Touchdown £9.99 **
99 (62) **NZ STORY** Hit Squad £7.99 *****
100 (94) **SPACE CRUSADE** Gremlin £25.99 ****

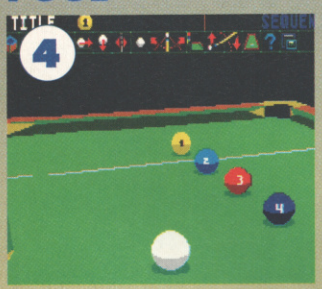
We figure you must have some idea how the charts work by now, so briefly: they're © ELSPA, they mix budgies and full pricers together, games are rated in stars, and now they're sponsored by Penguin!

ALIEN BREED



Alien Breed: Special Edition '92 is a bit of a surprise at number 1 this month. Martyn Brown of Team 17 is over the moon. "Obviously it's fantastic, we always had a strong feeling about the title and the response from players of the game has been absolutely overwhelming. It's been by far the fastest moving product we have ever had and the demand for *Alien Breed 2* has gone through the roof... but *Breed 2* will be superior... Breedsters are in for a real treat!"

POOL

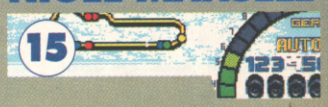


Archer Maclean's Pool has shot straight in at number 4, but Virgin had high hopes with the game from the start. Caroline Stokes said "We anticipated it would do well, even though it's a follow on from *Jimmy White's Snooker*. The first shipment sold out and we fully expect it to be in the charts for the next 52 weeks, just like *Jimmy White's Snooker* was before it."

ROAD RASH

Road Rash has leapt up the charts to number 6 this month. "It's one of EA's biggest-selling titles on the Mega Drive, and we always knew that it would be popular on the Amiga," said Simon Jeffery of Electronic Arts. "It's pure, unadulterated, unpretentious fun, and its sales reflect that. We believe that, like *John Madden Football*, this will hang around the charts for some while."

NIGEL MANSELL



David Martin of Gremlin was pleased to see *Nigel Mansell's World Championship* crack the top 20. "A combination of what is undoubtedly the hottest licence of the moment and one of the fastest F1 Grand Prix simulations ever is helping to turn the game into a great success for Gremlin."

CHARTS
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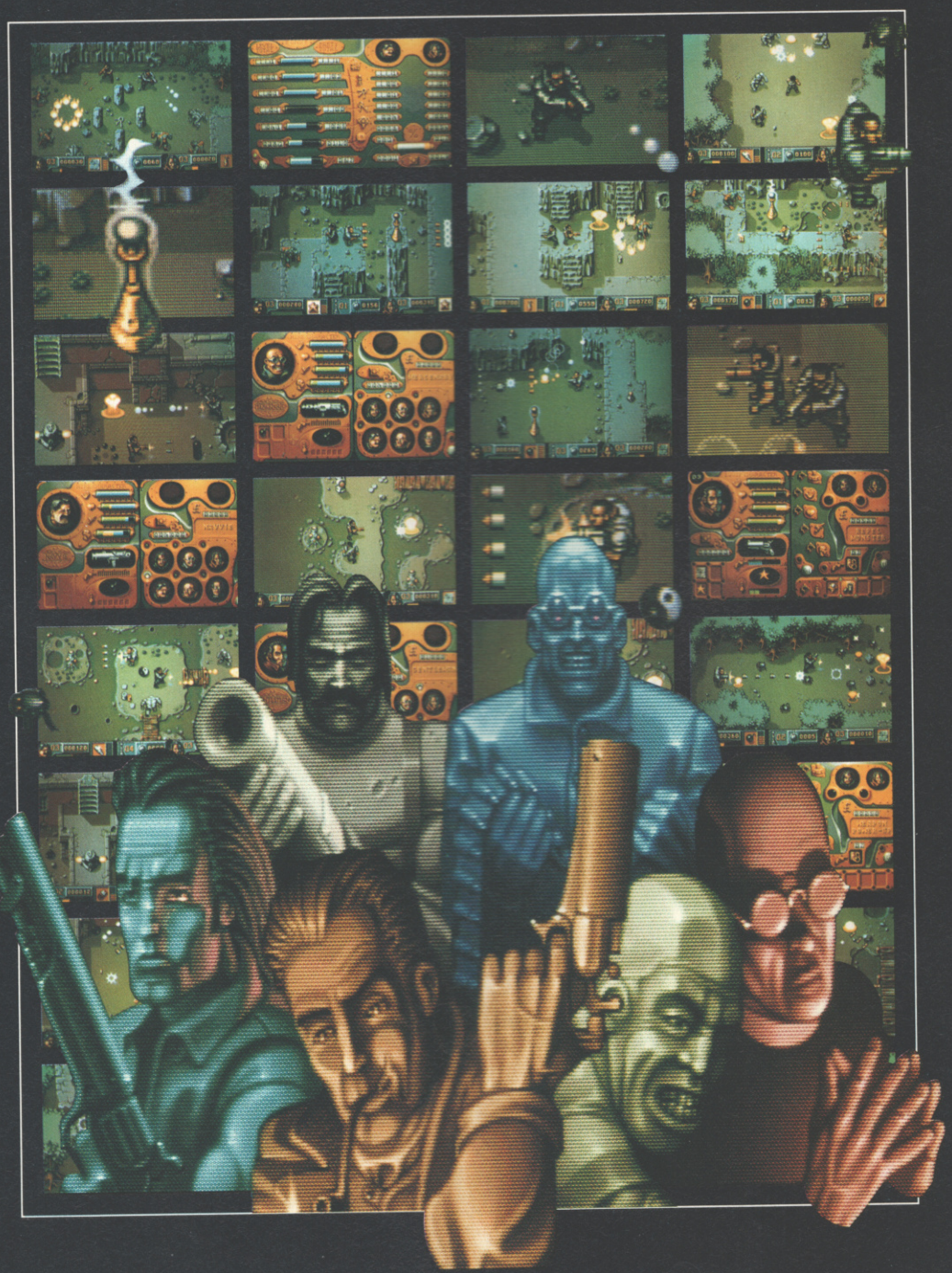
• The Bitmap Brothers •

THE CHAOS ENGINE



• TIME FOR CHAOS •

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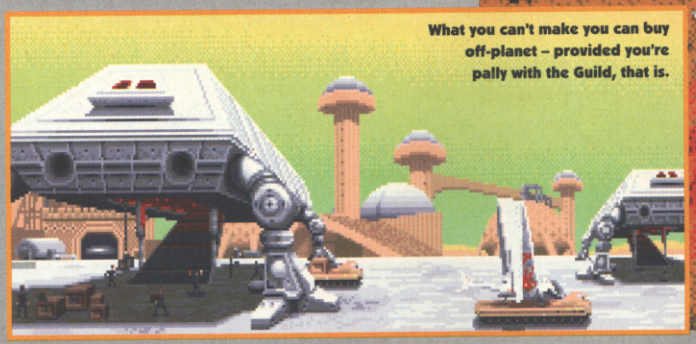
THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

Your little sister played 'Snap' with the Tarot cards and the vibes were disturbed. So only AP can help.

Use missile tanks to take out those stubborn pockets of resistance.



What you can't make you can buy off-planet – provided you're pally with the Guild, that is.

The game screen, complete with ornithopters, tanks and explosions. Lots and lots of lovely explosions.

DUNE

Game: DUNE II
Publisher: Virgin
Authors: Aaron E. Powell, Joe Bostic & Scott K. Bowen
ETA: March

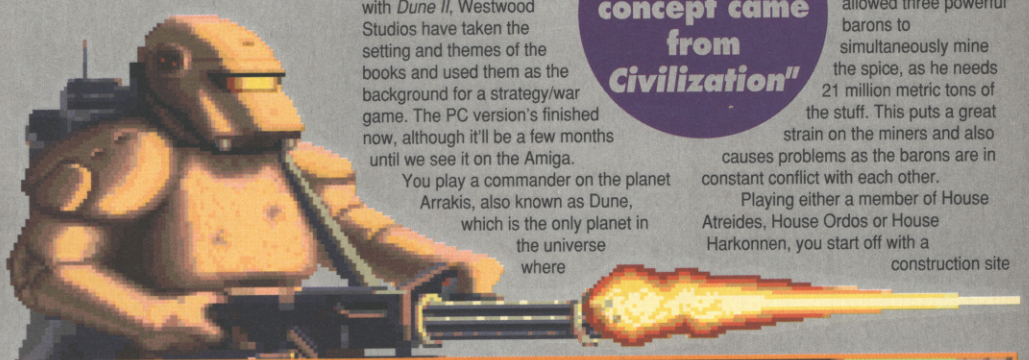
Briefly: There's a phrase that goes 'All good things must come to a sequel', summing up the popular belief that if someone's using the same idea again, it's because they haven't got any original ideas left. It's refreshing therefore to see that *Dune II* isn't just a re-hash of the first title. Last year's release of *Dune*, you may remember, was a sort of tactical adventure game that followed the book's plot line closely, but with *Dune II*, Westwood Studios have taken the setting and themes of the books and used them as the background for a strategy/war game. The PC version's finished now, although it'll be a few months until we see it on the Amiga.

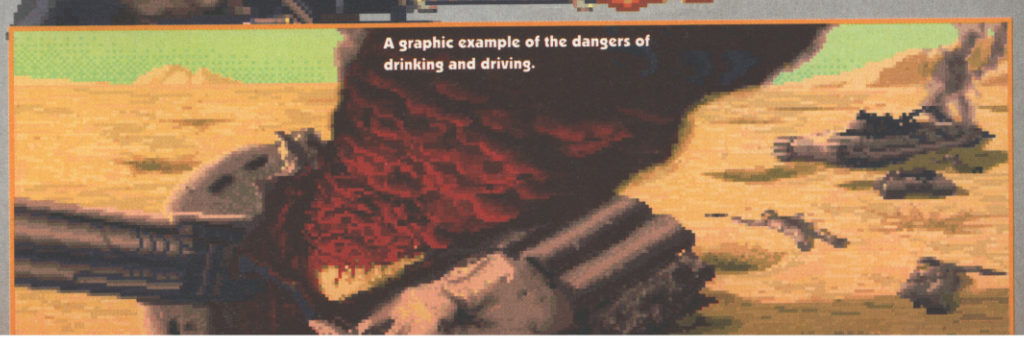
"The original concept came from *Civilization*"

You play a commander on the planet Arrakis, also known as Dune, which is the only planet in the universe where the life-prolonging spice, melange, is found. The game takes place in the year 8000 A.G., some 2190 years before Paul Atreides sets foot on the planet.

The galaxy's emperor, Frederick IV, has incurred huge debts by fighting off threats to his empire, and to repay them he's allowed three powerful barons to simultaneously mine the spice, as he needs 21 million metric tons of the stuff. This puts a great strain on the miners and also causes problems as the barons are in constant conflict with each other.

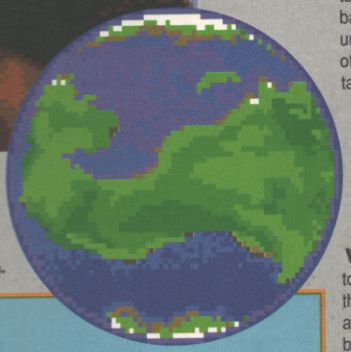
Playing either a member of House Atreides, House Ordos or House Harkonnen, you start off with a construction site



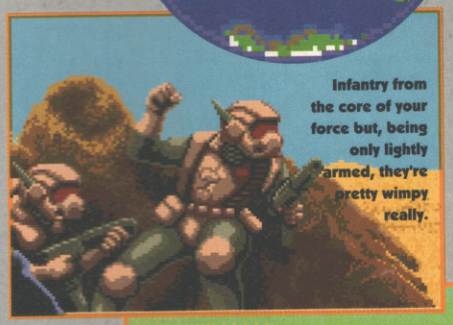


A graphic example of the dangers of drinking and driving.

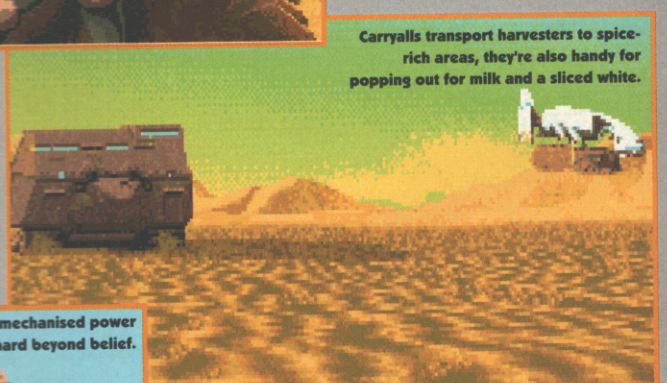
Centuries of living on such a wretched planet has turned the House Harkonnen into a miserable bunch...



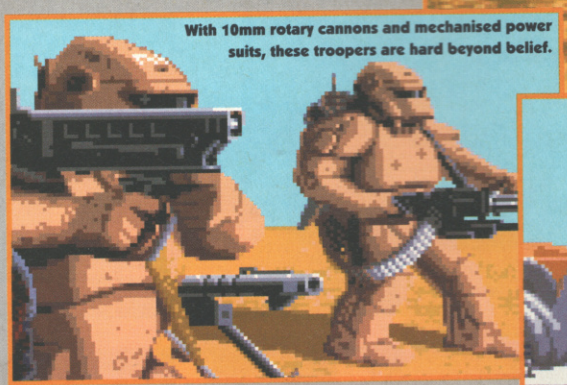
...whereas House Atreides come from lovely Caledan.



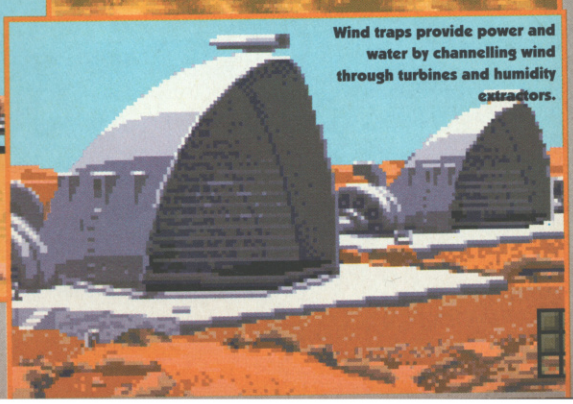
Infantry from the core of your force but, being only lightly armed, they're pretty wimpy really.



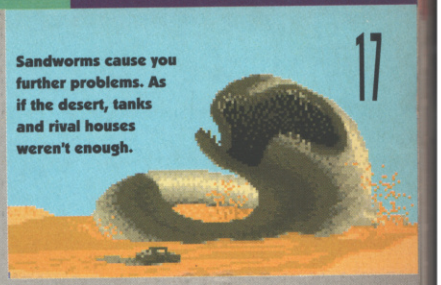
Carryalls transport harvesters to spice-rich areas, they're also handy for popping out for milk and a sliced white.



With 10mm rotary cannons and mechanised power suits, these troopers are hard beyond belief.



Wind traps provide power and water by channelling wind through turbines and humidity extractors.



Sandworms cause you further problems. As if the desert, tanks and rival houses weren't enough.

17

guarded by a few combat units, and must build up a spice mining operation. Obviously it isn't that easy, as you've got to defend the base, and also store the processed spice, so you've got to spread your time and money between building up your weaponry and increasing your production capacity, which in turn will increase your credit.

As you succeed in more missions you can start trading with the Guild (who control space travel) and buy heavier equipment from them. Mobile construction vehicles roam across the uncharted deserts until they find spice, at which point they set up as a production facility. Larger, more heavily armed and armoured tanks increase your attack capability. With this build up of weapons and defenses the nature of the game changes from a strategy game involving small-scale desert skirmishing to a vast battle ranging across the planet and involving numerous factories and defensive positions.

The creators speak: According to Aaron Powell, director of *Dune II*, the game doesn't follow the first as it was developed at around the same time. "We knew Cyro was working on a game, but we wanted to do a strategy/wargame and saw the Dune universe as an ideal place to base it." Lead programmer Joe Bostic and the team started work on the game back in 1990. "We'd recently started working with Virgin, who own the Dune licence, so our plans for the game fitted perfectly with our situation."

I thought the game was quite similar to *Sim City*, but Aaron says that "the original concepts came from *Civilization* and a Mega Drive game called *Herzog Zwei*. We made up the story line of three Houses on Arrakis (which never happens in the books) because we wanted more artistic freedom. We originally wanted six different houses, but we couldn't make them different enough, but the three available still offer the player a variety of gameplay."

An impressive facet of the PC version is the way that enemy troops act and react to the twists and turns of battle. If they are winning then they'll press home their attack, but if things are going badly they'll cut and run. "Developing this intelligence was a real struggle in this project," says Joe, "so we developed a system where the computer's units are divided into teams. When a team is looking for something to attack, it looks for the juiciest target which presents the least risk, and goes after it. In this way your weakest points are always picked upon. Once it has this general objective, each team will recruit new units until it reaches a maximum level. At this point it goes into 'attack mode' and when the unit has sustained enough damage it goes into 'run away and regroup mode.' Depleted teams then seek out each other and reform as a full team."

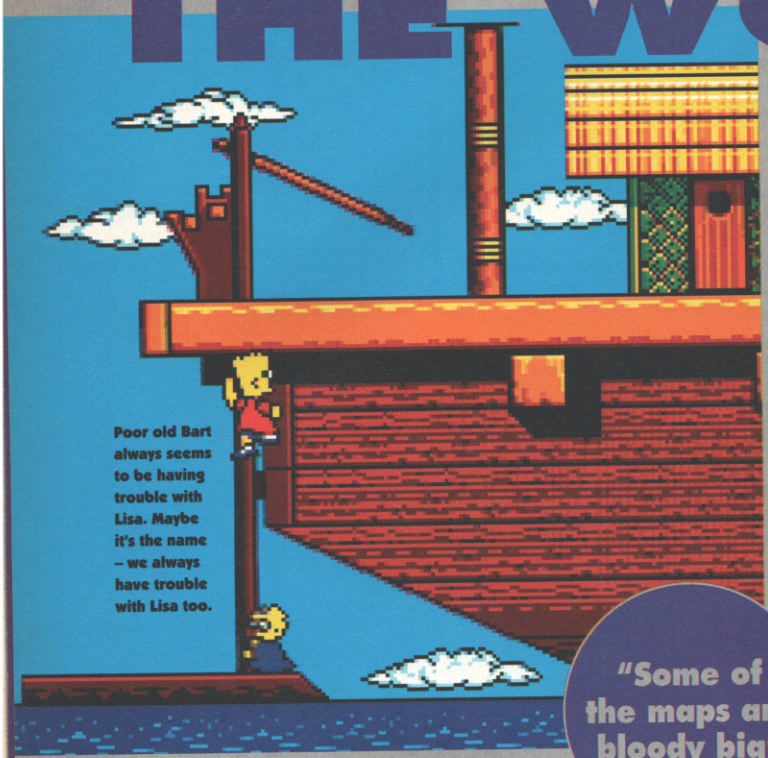
Another great feature on the PC version is the use of voices, from units talking on the radio, to general game information. Most noticeable is a soft and sensuous American female who informs you how the House Atreides are doing. So what chance is there of her appearing in the Amiga version?

Joe told us "At one point there was talk of having a 'Win a date with the *Dune* babe' contest, but it all kind of fell through, unfortunately. She actually took up 350K of disk space, with the other House voices taking up a similar amount. This is too much for the Amiga's rather limited capacity, and the jury's still out on whether we'll support a full compliment of digitised voices, but we're definitely planning on keeping the unit radio responses when you give them orders."

Verdict so far: I know I'm supposed to give an impartial journalistic account at this stage, but the PC version blew me away completely, so much that they had to boot me out of PC Format's office. It's got everything I love in a game, great graphics, strategy, tanks and the potential of a hot female from the US of A. All we've seen of the Amiga version so far are some screen shots, but these are very similar to the PC version, so it looks as though the conversion will come up to the same high standard.

● *MARK WINSTANLEY*

BART VERSUS THE WORLD



Poor old Bart always seems to be having trouble with Lisa. Maybe it's the name – we always have trouble with Lisa too.

Game: Bart Versus The World
Publisher: Acclaim
Authors: Arc Developments – Paul Walker (Visuals), Derrick Owens (Code), Andy McGinty (Sound & Music)
ETA: February

Briefly: Oh my goodness, it's another conversion of *The Simpsons* from the Nintendo console. "Don't have a cow, man," I say. "It might get milked to death like this one."

The Creators Speak: Hey! It's Paul Walker to tell us about the plot... "Mr Burns, the owner of the local nuclear power plant, has vowed to remove the Simpsons family from this Earth forever. Him and his sidekick, Smithers, have come up with a brilliant plan, and that's to hold an art competition. The winner and his family will be sent on a world cruise.

"Everyone enters, and all the entries are superb. Bart's entry though, is a stick drawing of Krusty The Clown. Of course, he wins and the Simpsons get to go around the world."

So how does this translate into playability? "Burns has enlisted the help of his relatives. There's a Fu-Manchu Burns, an Abominable Snowman Burns, a Hollywood Producer Burns and a Tutankhamen Burns. They're all out to get the Simpsons across the four levels: China, Antarctica, Hollywood and The Pyramids.

"There are two or three different levels per world, like one takes place on a Junk and another on the Great Wall Of China. Each level's a big background and platforms are part of it.

"On some levels you have to find a Super Krusty. You're Bart, by the way. Marge throws snowballs at Bart and he has to deflect them to hit a Super Krusty before it hits the floor. There are a few puzzle elements in there, too.

In Hollywood there's an underground Dracula section where you use coffins as short cuts to different or new areas of the map. Some of them take you to random places. One coffin is the exit.

"There are bonus games as well. There are three of those sliding puzzles using the Simpsons family. In Moe's Saloon game, Moe throws glasses and you have to jump over them and collect the Krusty characters he throws at you. And you know that thing with three nutshells and one of them's got a pea under it? There's that but with igloos and one of them has Krusty under it. There's a coffin game – you have to open them in the right order otherwise this hand comes out and strangles you. There's a fruit machine – you pull it and hit the buttons and try to get three of the same Simpsons characters. And there's a version of the Pairs card game."

Above: That looks like Krusty to me.

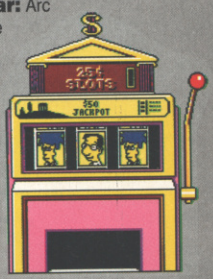
Left: Everyone loves tile puzzles. *(I certainly do. – Ed)* Here's one with everyone's favourite smart-alec yellow kid on it.

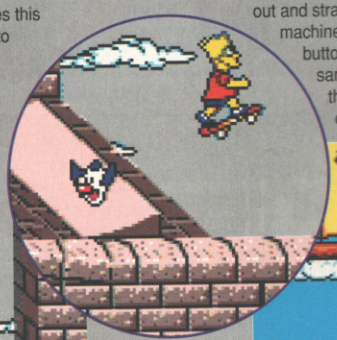
"Some of the maps are bloody big"

And how easy has it been to convert it? "We've had no problems at all really during development. We started at the end of August and it'll be finished shortly. Actually, we did spend a bit of time before that. We were supplied with the Nintendo code and the collision maps and it took a while to figure out how to get it on 68000. Some of the maps are bloody big."

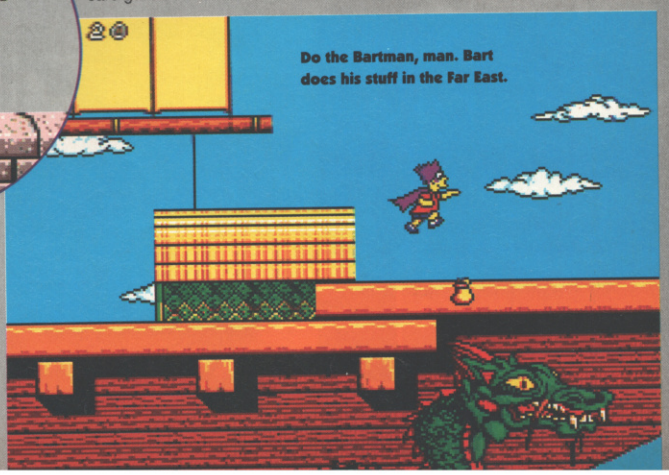
Verdict So Far: Arc have tarted up the visuals but the playability's identical to the Nintendo original. It's a mishmash of styles which could so very easily prove as a big a hit as a miss.

● *GARY PENN*





Thrills aplenty with skateboard action and all sorts. If it all works together this could be a real winner of a game.

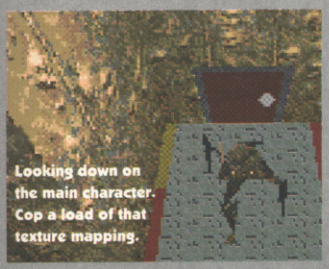


Do the Bartman, man. Bart does his stuff in the Far East.

It's a jungle out there – a concrete jungle

The city is going to be big. Jolly big.

CAPTIVE 2


Looking down on the main character. Cop a load of that texture mapping.

Game: Captive 2
Publisher: Mindscape
Authors: Tony Crowther & Ross Goodley
ETA: March '93

Briefly: Sequels, sequels everywhere, and you won't be surprised to learn that this is the imaginatively-titled follow up to that adventurey classic of yesteryear, *Captive*. It's set in a massive futuristic city where the captive from *Captive* has escaped only to find that the city is bulging with people imprisoned for no reason at all. In this cyberpunky world the group with clout are the global corporations, and Bio-Co is one of these. With a problem. Of the millions of droids they've produced, a few of them are malfunctioning and people are dying. Rather than admit a fault on their side, they've been framing innocent citizens for the murders and slinging them into jail. Voila, case closed. Sitting at home watching TV screens you control four droids who do all the tiresome moving around business. You've also got a bank of remote cameras that you can fix to various characters so even when you split the team up, you can still keep track of all the action.

The creators speak: I saw Tony and Ross at Tony's house in Sheffield, connected at the hip and the keyboards of their computers. They'd even changed their sleep patterns so that they were awake during the day instead of beavering away through the night. "We've done all the hard stuff now," said Tony, "all we've got to do now is work out the game." What? How've they filled the four months they've been working on *Captive 2* then?

"We're using an entirely new graphics system, so we've been developing a game engine from scratch. Rather than using sprites for the characters encountered we're using animated vector graphics. This uses far less memory than sprites, and because we've patterned the vectors with a bitmap they look much better than normal, plain vectors."

"1000 buildings with 16 floors each to visit"

Tony and Ross are so pleased with the graphics package they've written to create this 3D metropolis that they'd like to try and release it at some point. For *Captive 2* though, they've used it to create a solid-looking world that can be moved through convincingly. This isn't like *Dungeon Master* where you jump along from one static view to another, it all flows as if you're moving through it. This has caused some problems though, as Tony told us. "To get the flowing effect we use intermediate views, so a 90 degree turn would be shown as two 45 degree ones. This burns up memory space, so to get it running on a standard Amiga we've cut the intermediate views for up and down, and we could save another 70K by losing these views entirely, but that's only a last resort."

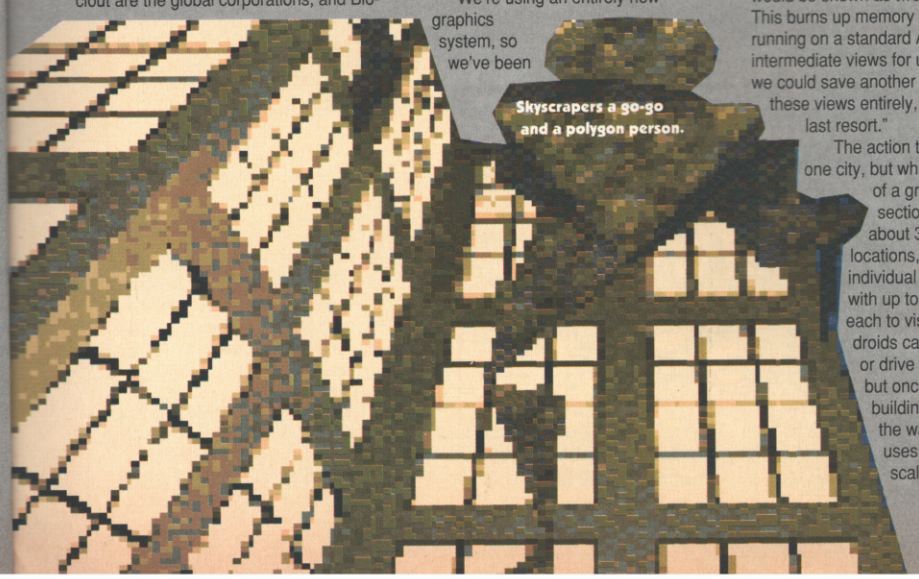
The action takes place in just one city, but what a city. Made up of a grid of nine sections there are about 36,000 locations, or 1000 individual buildings with up to 16 floors each to visit. The droids can walk, fly or drive around the city, but once inside the buildings it's legwork all the way. The game uses two different scales so that you feel small and feeble in the city, and claustrophobic in the interior sections. Surely it would take years to just visit all the locations, let alone complete the missions. "Exactly," says Tony." The number of locations allows 4096 missions, each involving rescuing a different captive. The clues take the form of a paper chase from location to location, and if you go wrong, you'll know about it as you've usually got a fight on your hands."

Travel round all 36,000 locations in a luxury hover-limo.

Verdict so far: There's certainly been plenty of effort put into making this different enough from the original.

Although we can't comment on the gameplay (there isn't a game so far) the game system is incredibly smooth and fast enough to give you a real feeling of moving through the city. By using varying brightnesses, the scene also fades moodily into darkness, creating a 'what's around the corner?' type feeling of impending doom. With the original *Captive* being so popular, *Captive 2*'s got a lot to live up to, and from what we've seen so far it looks like it probably will.

● *MARK WINSTANLEY*


Skyscrapers a go-go and a polygon person.

Along with US Gold's *Legends Of Valour* and *Captive 2*, *Ambermoon* is one of a new breed of role-playing games. Texture-mapped graphics ahoy.

AMBERMOON

Game: Ambermoon
Publisher: Thalion Software
Authors: Karsten Koeper (design, story and editing), Juri Horneman (programming), Thorsten Mutschall, Monika Krawinkel (graphics), Erik Simon (graphics and production), Michael Bittner (additional programming), Matthias Steinwachs (music)
ETA: April 1993

Briefly: *Ambermoon* is the follow up to Thalion's popular *Amberstar* and like its predecessor it's a fantasy role-playing game set on the planet Lyramion and its two moons. There are loads of improvements on the previous game, including a real-time texture-mapped dungeon system, which overcomes the blockiness of the original and gives super smooth scrolling. There's also a better system for moving items around, by simply clicking on the item and dragging it to where you want to put it, and the relative scale and size of objects are more realistic.

The game is much larger than *Amberstar*, with the world map coming in at four times the size of the original, and Thalion tantalisingly mention that there is more than just one world to explore in the game. We're also assured a gripping plot with plenty of twists and sub-quests. Things are going to be made a lot easier for the user too, as the game is hard disk installable and supports all available memory, disk drives and there's even special routines for turbo boards. Places already visited will be marked on disk, meaning you won't have to go through any tedious walking when returning to important places.

"The world map is four times the size of the original"

The creators speak: It's a German team, as you can probably guess from the names above. Fortunately, like most Europeans, they speak better English than me so communication was no problem. I spoke to Juri Horneman, who's responsible for a lot of the game, and asked him what it's all about.

"Well those who played *Amberstar* will remember the glowing red moon at the end, on which the evil Tarbos was imprisoned. The background to this game is that the red moon crashes onto the planet, destroying most of the countries. Civilisation has to be rebuilt, and Tarbos survives in some form, which you'll have to find out. You don't have to have played the original game to play this one of course, but those who did will recognise some references. The other two moons are involved in the story too."

How many characters do you control in the game?

"You start off with just one character, who you pick out of six males and six females. You throw computerised dice to determine his or her attributes. On the adventure you can pick up to five more companions to join you."

Our art people love putting pictures in bubbles.

You talk about the complex dialogue system in the game. How does it work?

"There are two types of characters in the game, one that just give you stock responses and the others which really have something useful and interesting to say. You can offer them food, gold or objects in exchange for information and clues. You select words from a word list that you add to during the game by picking up on other people's conversations or seeing a word on a statue for instance."

It seems we're talking about a pretty big challenge, here.

"It will take a long time to complete simply because it's so big. *Amberstar* had some very tricky puzzles in it, and took about three months to complete. We've tried to make the puzzles in this one easier, but it will still take longer than *Amberstar* because of its size."

With a wealth of good RPGs coming out, what does *Ambermoon* have to offer over all the others?

"The texture mapping adds a lot to the game. Moving and rotating is so smooth that you really feel like you're there. You can choose which character's eyes you want to view the action through, and the eyes of a dwarf for example are lower than those of an elf. It's all very realistic."

Verdict so far: We've only seen the texture mapped dungeon stuff working so far, but doesn't it look lovely? If the rest works as smoothly, and there's as much to get through as they promise we could be looking at the biggest and best RPG on the Amiga. We're looking forward to it.

● *TIM TUCKER*

As well as an advanced 3D system there are some lovely 2D world maps. And there's more than one world too.

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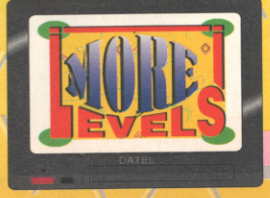

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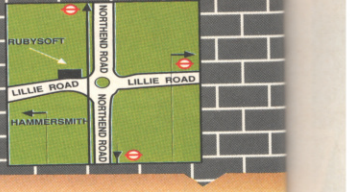

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GAMES

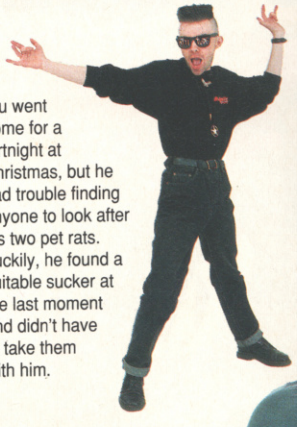
Look out, here come the game reviews. This month we've got reviews of *Street Fighter II*, *Nick Faldo's Golf*, *Alien*^{3}, *WWF Rampage*, *History Line* and loads more. You'd better get reading right away. After this shoddy display, that is...

JUST WHO DO WE THINK WE ARE?

MARK RAMSHAW

This month Mark achieved a life-long ambition by having his name in the Sunday Mirror. "It's more important to me than being the editor of a computer magazine," he said. Mark, are you sure you're in the right job?

STUART CAMPBELL



Stu went home for a fortnight at Christmas, but he had trouble finding anyone to look after his two pet rats. Luckily, he found a suitable sucker at the last moment and didn't have to take them with him.

TIM NORRIS

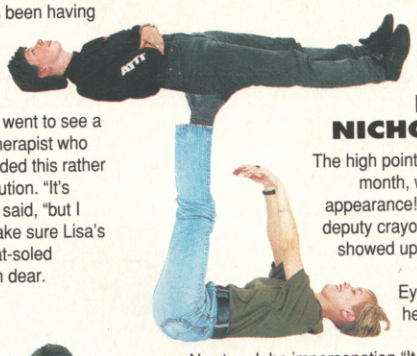
Tim continued his search for the ultimate entertainment experience and had a satellite dish installed. "It's really great," he enthused. "The films are good, but the best thing is UK Gold where you can see all the old tat the BBC daren't show any more." Lovely.

GARY PENN

We haven't seen Gary this month since he lives in St Albans (and because we hate him), but he keeps us up to date with his activities nevertheless. Here we see him in training for Britain's 1996 Olympic shot-putting team. Good luck, Gaz.

JACQUIE SPANTON

Ex-circus performer Jacquie (don't ask, okay?) has been having some problems getting to sleep lately. She went to see a new-age therapist who recommended this rather bizarre solution. "It's okay," she said, "but I have to make sure Lisa's wearing flat-soled shoes." Oh dear.

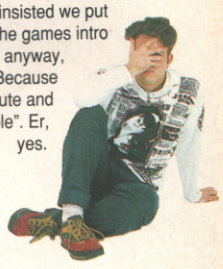


TIM TUCKER

Tim had a birthday (despite his boyish good looks he's actually 27, would you believe?), but we didn't let him skive off. In fact, he didn't get out of the office until after midnight, by which time we'd eaten all his birthday cake. Life's like that.

ADAM PETERS

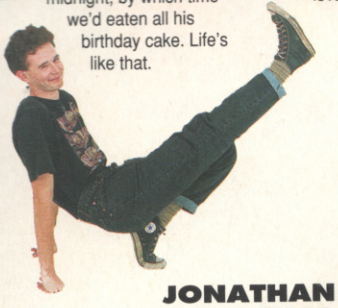
Adam didn't actually do any work for us this month, which is why he looks so upset in his photo. Jacquie insisted we put him on the games intro page anyway, though, "Because he's so cute and lovable". Er, yes.



LISA NICHOLLS

The high point of Lisa's month, was a TV appearance! Yes, our deputy crayon wielder showed up on Stars In Their Eyes, doing her famous Olivia Newton-John impersonation. "It was truly harrowing," said a TV critic yesterday.

MARK WINSTANLEY



6'5" Mark continued to be unfeasibly tall for most of this month, but that didn't stop him being mistaken for Chris Evans from Channel 4's Big Breakfast several times. In fact, come to think of it, he always comes in a bit late in the mornings...

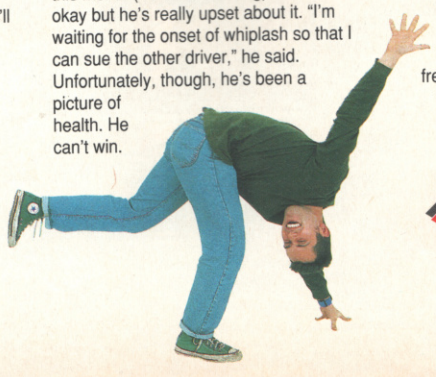
JONATHAN DAVIES

Jonathan was a bit miffed at the picture we used of him last month, so this time, by way of compensation, we sat him on a big pointy red arrow. Uppity freelancers – we hate 'em.

RICHARD LONGHURST

Lightweight father figure Rich has been too busy changing nappies all month to get up to anything interesting other than a truly awful Jimmy Savile impression. "The doctor says I'll be better soon, though," he said cheerfully.

DAVE GOLDER



Poor old Dave was involved in a car crash this month (he wasn't driving). He was okay but he's really upset about it. "I'm waiting for the onset of whiplash so that I can sue the other driver," he said. Unfortunately, though, he's been a picture of health. He can't win.

RONNIE RANDALL

Y'know, we're going to have to be a bit more disciplined about our freelancers. One solitary review (*Flight Of The Intruder*) and we have to put this frankly disturbing picture of Ronnie on the page, taking up space we could have used for really great stories about the rest of us. Tch.

How does our scoring system work, then?

1. We tell it like it is. We think very carefully about our reviews and games get the mark we think they deserve. Good game or bad, we'll make sure you know what we think.
2. Rating systems get confusing so we give a single percentage mark and a few summing-up sentences.
3. It's a simple system, it really is, so that's it.

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"Space age adventure has never been so good. An excellent addition to any Space Crusade fans collection." Brad Burton - Amiga Action

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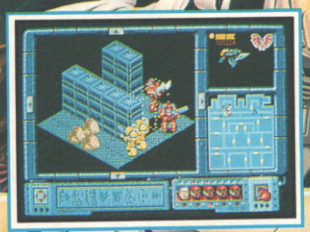
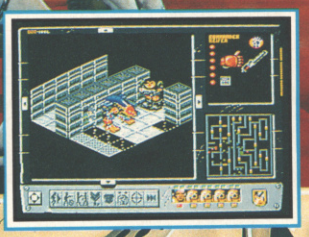
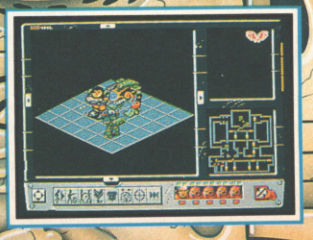


Screen shots from Amiga format





GREMLIN®

Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd.,
Carver House, 2-4 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS.

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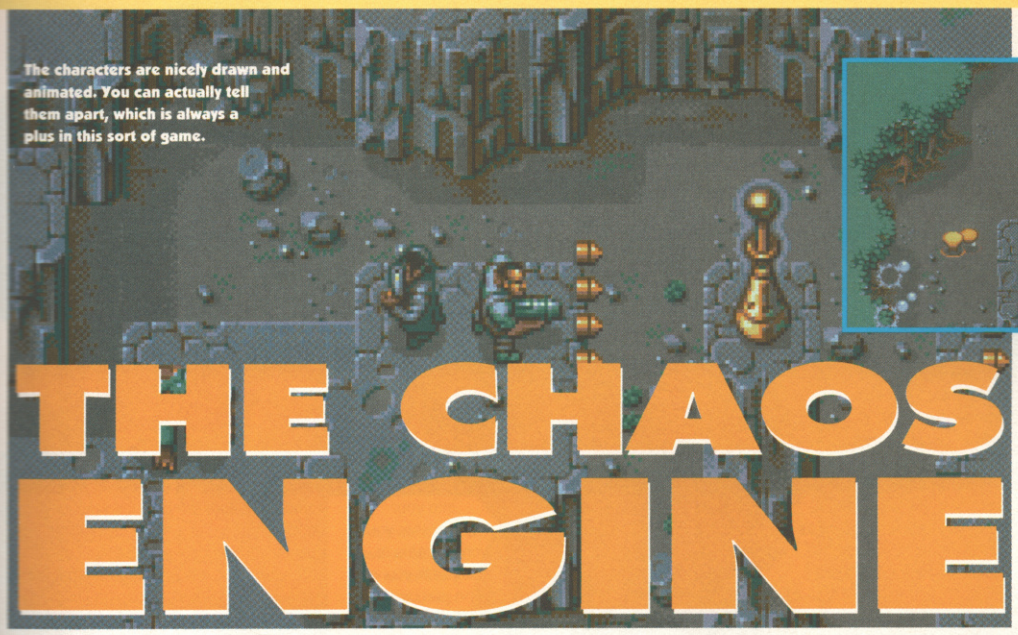


The characters are nicely drawn and animated. You can actually tell them apart, which is always a plus in this sort of game.

Every now and again you're attacked by mechanical monsters. These are bugs.

THE CHAOS ENGINE

Another long-awaited game finally shows its face. Hurrah.

Game: The Chaos Engine
Publisher: Renegade
Authors: The Bitmap Brothers
Price: £25.99
Release: Late January

We're a couple of weeks into the New Year now, and it's time, I think, for some resolutions. We're all going to give up smoking for a start (er, not that any of us actually do, but it's the thought that counts), and we're going to do everything we can in the pages of AMIGA POWER to promote peace, love and global understanding.

Most of all, though, this year, no more *Magic Pockets* gags. Never again will the office reverberate to lines like 'Did you hear about the man who played *Magic Pockets* with his Action Replay slow-motion device on and went back in time?', no more pointing at slugs in the car park shrubbery and going 'Ooh look, the Bitmap Kid's shades have fallen off'. Nope, apparently poor old Eric Bitmap's a bit of a nervous wreck and a shadow of his bright and breezy former self on account of our good-natured japery over the last 12 months or so, so we're going to be nice to the young chap in '93. And it's nice to see that, in the spirit of goodwill and reciprocal chummery, Eric and his Bitmap Boys have made things easy for us by releasing the kind of game that I honestly didn't think they had in them any more.

"The artificial intelligence is impressive"

Ladies and gentlemen, *The Chaos Engine*. For almost certainly the highest-profile game programmers ever, the Bitmaps have been very quiet for a very long time. Since *Gods*, reviewed in our first issue there's only been *Gods* rewrite *Magic Pockets*, and we've already promised to stop making fun of that one. You'd hope, then, that they'd have spent all that time coming up with something pretty damn special. Usually in this business when you hope things like that you're only setting yourself up for horrible disappointment and disillusionment, but this time, blow me down if that isn't exactly what they've done. 1993's only weeks old, but if this isn't in my top 10 come December you can be assured that we'll just have had Amiga software's best ever year. I like this game. Here's why: It's fun.

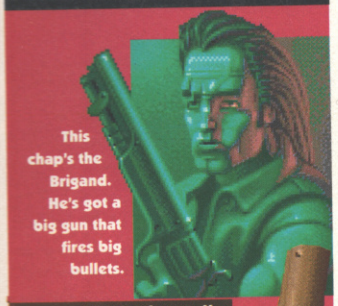
We see a load of games here, and most of them are technically competent. Very many of them are technically 'good', some of them are nothing short of programming genius, in terms of what they make the Amiga do. If you want an extreme example then the *Dragon's Lair* series (number three is reviewed elsewhere in this issue) is the most obvious one, but there are dozens, hundreds even of less glaring cases. I'm

Select yourself a character here.

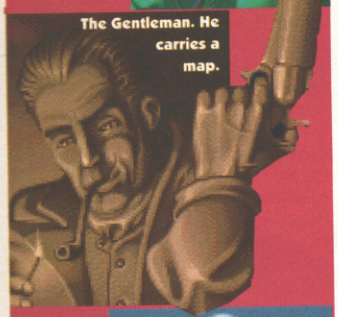
Make sure you pick things up when you've killed something. They leave keys, money...

If you play the one-player game, the computer plays much better than you.

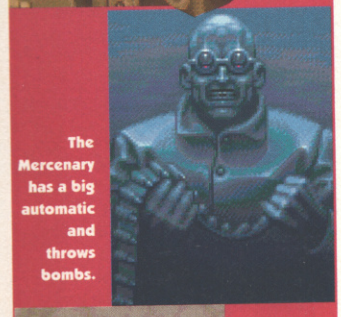
MALE ORDER FROM CHAOS



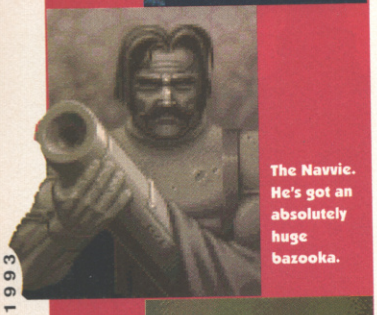
This chap's the Brigand. He's got a big gun that fires big bullets.



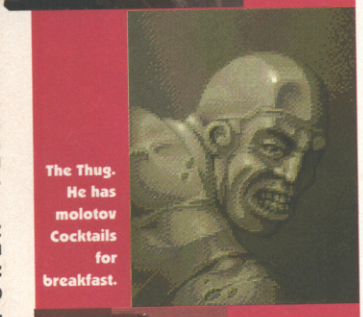
The Gentleman. He carries a map.



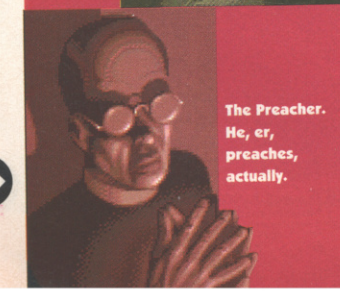
The Mercenary has a big automatic and throws bombs.



The Navvie. He's got an absolutely huge bazooka.



The Thug. He has molotov Cocktails for breakfast.



The Preacher. He, er, preaches, actually.

thinking here of stuff like (just plucking a few names out of the air) *Assassin*, stuff like *Nigel Mansell*, stuff like *Troddlers*, stuff like *Wolfchild* (remember that? Thought not), stuff, indeed, like *Gods* and *Magic Pockets* (oops). You give 'em a play, you go 'Yes, yes that's all very nice', and you seize on the first possible opportunity to stop playing and go and do something else. Why? Because they're No Fun.

Then, of course, you get the stuff that isn't technically impressive (*Asteroids*, say, or *Monster Business* or *Exile*), but is great fun. None of it ever wins awards, of course, because your average punter goes 'Oh yeah, I remember that, it was great fun to play but it didn't sell as many copies as *Street Fighter II* so I can't possibly vote for it or people will laugh at me and I'll lose all my street credibility', but it's great fun all the same. And isn't that the idea? Isn't that what we're looking for? Entertainment? Fun? Blimey, everything looks really weird from up here on this horse.

The point I'm desperately trying to wrestle to the ground here, though, is that just occasionally, maybe half-a-dozen times a year if you're really lucky, you get a game that does both. *The Chaos Engine* (you remember) is one of those.

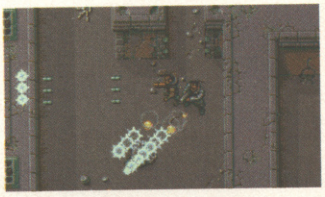
"Superb arcade adventuring antics"

I won't bore you with the plot, since this *The Chaos Engine* thing's been 'on the way' for so long that you really ought to know it backwards by now. Besides which, it's the plot, it doesn't matter. Not mattering is its job. The only reason plots exist is to provide employment for down-on-their-luck writers desperate to earn a crust knocking out instruction manuals. So I say 'yah boo' to the plot ('cos I'm a crazy dangerous guy like that, and besides, plots can't hit you). You run about and you kill stuff, that's all you want to know.

Still, without going into the plot reasons for it, there's a pretty significant difference in the way that you run about and kill stuff in *The Chaos Engine*. It's not just you, y'see. In *The Chaos Engine* (have you noticed the fantastically subtle way I keep repeating the name of the game a lot, to burn it so indelibly into your brains that you won't be able to sleep until you've gone and bought a copy? Or is it just that I'm compensating for not mentioning it at all for the first page and a half of the review? Who can tell? Not me. I'm mad, I am. Gratuitous exclamation marks!!) you're accompanied on your stuff-killing antics by a second player.

'Hang on,' you cry, 'doesn't that mean I'm going to have to go and get my socially-challenged mate Spotty round to my house every time I feel like a quick go? He smells funny.' Well, no. The clever thing about *The Chaos Engine (Are you being sponsored by* The Chaos Engine? – *Paul Merton)* is that even when there's only one of you, there's still two of you. *(You've been drinking at lunchtime again, haven't you? – Ed)* This seemingly-unlikely state of affairs comes about because when you play *The Chaos Engine* in one-player mode, the computer controls a second team member (you select a two-man team from a party of six characters with varying attributes), using an artificial intelligence routine which is, well, Technically Impressive, to say the least. The computer character is only allowed to do certain things (kill baddies, pick up treasure, shoot the nodes which open the level exits, but not use special abilities or collect the keys which reveal the various routes through each stage), but it does them is such a way as to be a pretty damn convincing substitute for another human being. In addition, in one-player mode the computer player brings added tactical depth to the game, as you can switch special abilities between the two characters and lots of other stuff that I'm not going to tediously shopping-list my way through now.

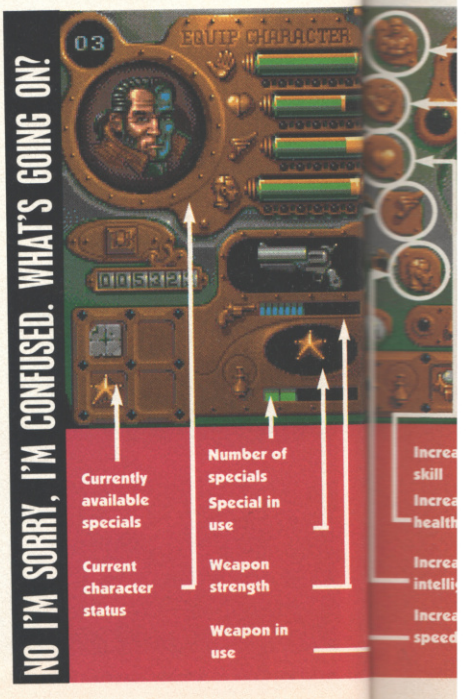
It's not only your companion who's an individual character, though – the bad guys have a real feel of intelligent malice about them. There's no wandering dumbly into the line of fire here – the enemies all behave differently, and it's not rare to see one poke round from behind a tree and take pot-shots at you without ever leaving himself open to your return fire. What this



Bang. Blam blam blam. Bang. No, don't go that way, etc... Two-player fun aplenty.

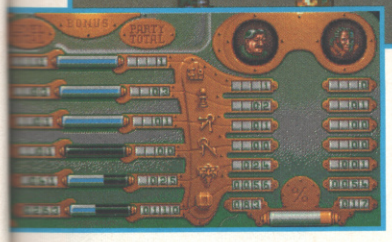
Once you've got a character, you'll have to give him some kit.

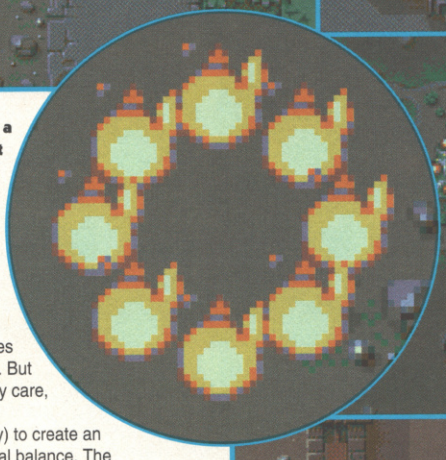
NO I'M SORRY, I'M CONFUSED. WHAT'S GOING ON?



Once you've got some power-ups, things really start to get interesting.

Die you filthy mutant chaotic scum, and all that.


Lovely, smashing, super. Let's have a look at what you could have won.


Oh wow that's a kind of brilliant incendiary device thing. You just step on it and: Kersmoosh!

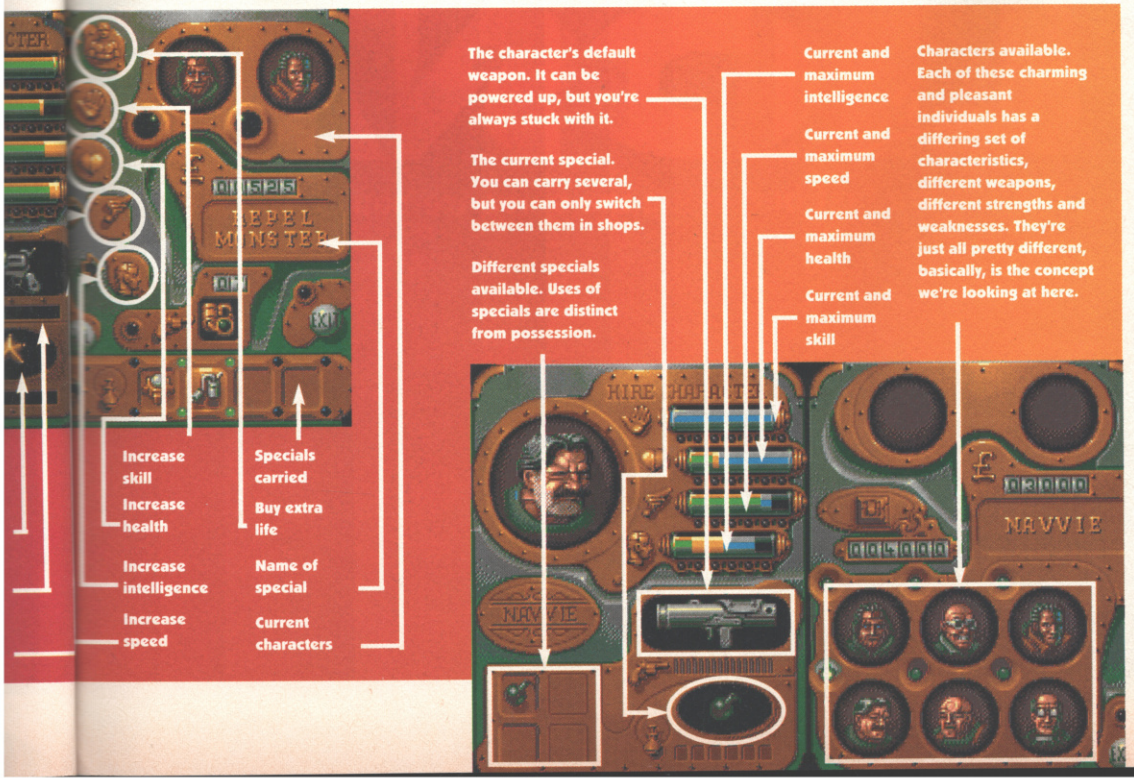
Look out! There's one coming at you from the right. No, your right, at the bottom of the screen.

By now, it may have become apparent that most of the game is spent shooting things. It's great.

means is that you get a real satisfaction from offing the little bleeders, and a near-overwhelming sense of triumph from actually completing a level.

Which brings me to my only real gripe – as far as levels are concerned, there are only 16, divided into four worlds of er, four levels each. While there's a huge number of different routes you can take through them, and a huge number of secret rooms and hidden bonuses and so on to discover, I'm a little worried that your average player will finish the game (albeit only having played maybe 50% of it) in a few days, especially since the password system it uses gives you infinite continues in all but name. But no, I don't really care, I'm only trying (unsuccessfully) to create an illusion of critical balance. The bottom line is that, for a thousand tiny reasons which I haven't even begun to touch on (partly because I don't want to spoil the fun of discovering them for yourself and partly because I spent so much time at the start wibbling on about something else altogether), this is utterly excellent computer game entertainment. Even better than *Magic Pockets*.

● *STUART CAMPBELL*



UPPERS Possibly the most atmospheric game I've played in the last 12 months. The two-man team idea works really well, too, and the all-important all-out action that was missing from *Gods* and *Magic Pockets* is present in spades.

DOWNERS I've got a nagging feeling that you won't get all that much lasting play out of this, although you could be going back and discovering new bits for months. And a two-fire-button option would have been a godsend. Oh, and it's still all a bit, er, metallic and blue, isn't it?

THE BOTTOM LINE

Superb arcade adventuring antics from the Bitmaps, combining innovation, tried-and-tested ideas, technical achievement, but most importantly, a truckload of fun. A spectacular return to form, and an unmissable game.

89 PERCENT

Game: Lionheart
Publisher: Thalion
Authors: Erwin Kloibhofer, Michael Bittnel (programming), Henk Nieborg (graphics), Erik Simon (design), Mathias Steinnachs (music & FX)
Price: £25.99
Release: End of January

Steroids. That explains everything. They say it helps athletes perform like superhumans, and I reckon it's what Thalion have been feeding their programmers over the last year. Just look at the evidence – first *No Second Prize*, and now this. I mean come on guys, you're just going to leave all the other Amiga programmers red-faced. How can they compete?

Sit down, Mark. Take a deep breath, and don't get over-excited. You're a professional. Unbiased. Able to offer both sides of the story. What's needed here is a separation of personalities – let the positive and negative sides argue about just how good this game is. Still with me, readers? Gosh.

THOSE MOVES IN FULL – HE'S LION

THAT KATE BUSH ALBUM

Nice Mark: So we've had loads of great cartoon platformers such as *Titus The Fox*, and fantastic coin-op platformers like *Rainbow Islands* and *Parasol Stars*, but the only outstanding hack-and-slash platformer on the Amiga is *Switchblade 2*. Until now, that is.

Nasty Mark: So what. I mean, isn't *Switchblade 2* enough?

Nice Mark: No, frankly. *Switchblade 2* is getting a bit creaky, and visually it's certainly dated. It's fairer to compare it to *Wolfchild*, and let's face it – there's simply no competition.

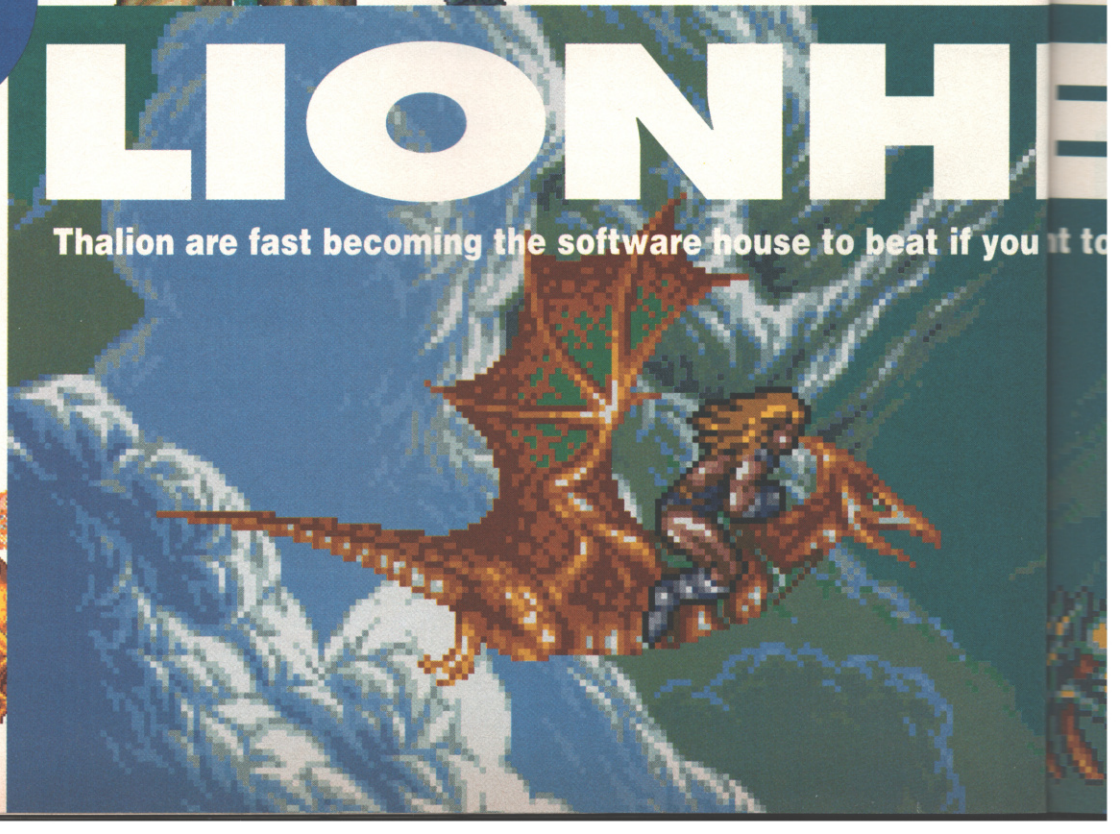
"Visually, it knocks hell out of any other game"

Nasty Mark: Okay, Mr Sycophantic, just what's *Lionheart* all about then? Convince me.

Nice Mark: In a nutshell it's a scrolling platform hack-'em-up over more than a dozen levels – give or take the odd extra hidden bit. The game follows a big guy as he attempts to recover the Lionheart and save his girlie into the bargain. What this means is nine levels above and underground, then a bit of beastie-riding and some dragon flying. After that it really gets spectacular.

Nasty Mark: Yeah, well it doesn't sound too spectacular to me.

Nice Mark: But I haven't told you about all the neat touches yet. The bad guys are fantastic for a start – all with animation and action almost as fluid as the main character's. Plus, as the levels progress, new ones appear which actually serve some purpose. Some bird-like creatures can be used as temporary platforms for instance. It's all very clever. Nasties on later levels have enough moves to appear in a beat-'em-up. And that end-of-swamp level baddy is a real scary bitch. And – hey! – that beautiful scenery isn't just any old beautiful scenery. The programmers didn't just buy it at the beautiful scenery counter in Tesco's, you know. It's their own special kind of beautiful scenery. There are vines to slide down and swing on, and platforms which bounce, spin and cause all sorts of mischief. And there's even foliage to cut a path through. And the character interacts with it all – sliding down slopes, running slowly up banked bits, hovering



Just take a look at that gorgeous bad guy, man.

precariously on ledges. The later concrete levels meanwhile have those swinging platforms so beloved of console owners everywhere. It's right smart.

Nasty Mark: But what about all this technical tedium? It can't be that good.

Nice Mark: You want to talk technical? Try a couple of hundred colours on screen, parallax on practically every single line of the screen, and some of the best character animation this side of *Prince Of Persia*. That guy is versatile too.

Nasty Mark: Yeah, but he minces his run.

Nice Mark: Ah. You do have a point. But just turn that volume up and listen to that music. One person actually thought I had the Amiga hooked up to expensive stereo speakers (the kind you can win in our fab competition this month). It's damned impressive.

Nasty Mark: It's not very ravey though, is it? And that's quite enough shameless compo plugging, by the way.

Nice Mark: Let's face it, it's a complete groove to play, and it visually knocks hell out of any console or Amiga game. I find it hard to believe that it's actually possible for a game like this to exist.

Nasty Mark: Oh please.

Nice Mark: There's no denying it. *Lionheart* has crept into the football pitch of Amiga software in the dead of night, and then quickly and quietly moved the goalposts by quite a way. I'm finding it difficult avoid playing the game long enough to write this review.

Nasty Mark: Get a grip, you moron. I've seen dried-up puddles with more depth, and...SMACK...ouch!

Nice Mark: Right, that's the last we'll be hearing from him. Trust *me* readers, it's a tasty feast of hacking, slashing and lushness. In the long-run the gameplay might be a tad basic, and there's a scarcity of monsters to bash in some places, but nothing's perfect, you know? This is just in a different league to practically any other Amiga game around. But how the hell will anybody follow this?

● *MARK RAMSHAW x2*

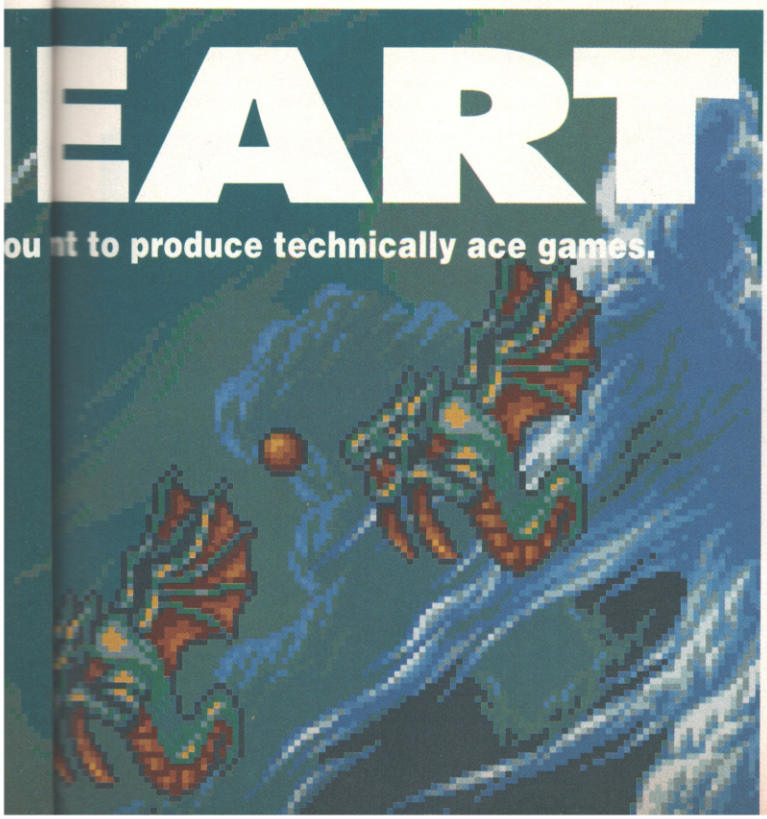
UPPERS Technically, *Lionheart* leaves all other Amiga (and console) platform games behind. The main character is suitably dynamic (except for his run), and the levels are big, and wonderfully structured.

DOWNERS The monsters on the early levels tend to blend in with the backgrounds. More intelligence on some the nasties would have been nice too.

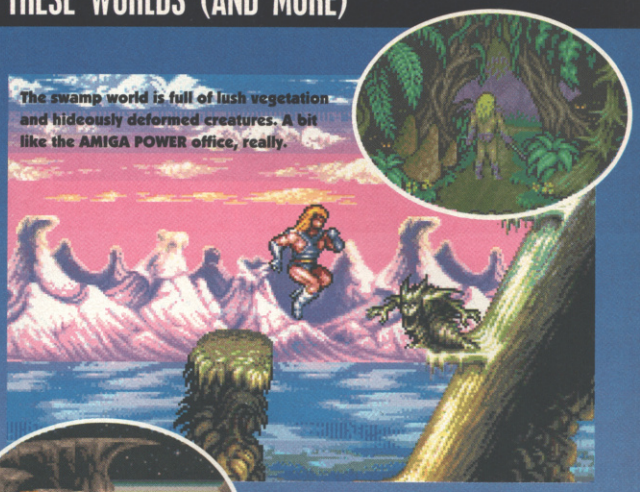
THE BOTTOM LINE

Some of the best graphics and sound you're ever likely to see on the humble A600, the gameplay perhaps doesn't quite match the level of technical excellence, but it's still the best platform hack-and-slash around. I'm afraid you're going to have to buy this one too. Sorry.

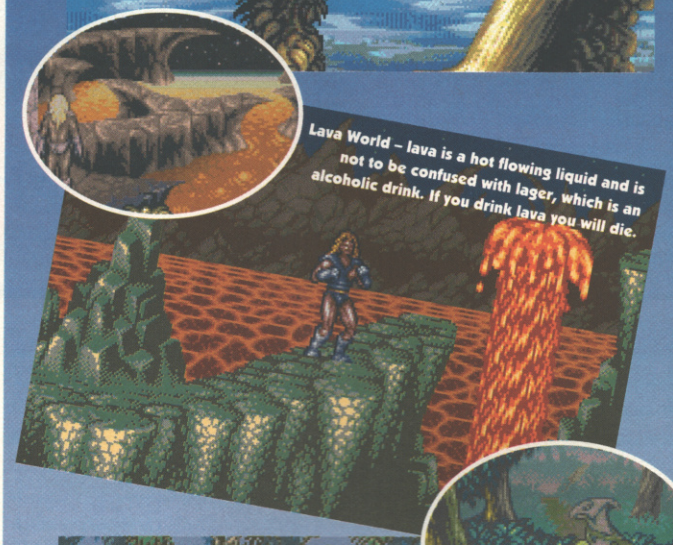
87 PERCENT



ALL THESE WORLDS (AND MORE)



The swamp world is full of lush vegetation and hideously deformed creatures. A bit like the AMIGA POWER office, really.



Lava World – lava is a hot flowing liquid and is not to be confused with lager, which is an alcoholic drink. If you drink lava you will die.

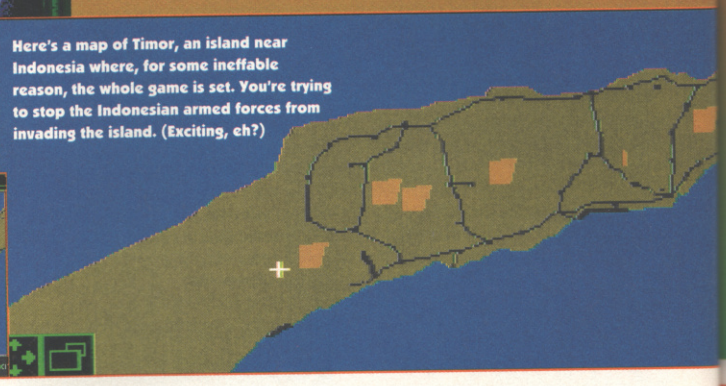
Ride through the woodland on the back of a small dinosaur in search of an airship. Well, it doesn't happen every day, does it?

Mount your trusty steed and take on that monstrous thing with the big claws. Alternatively, go home for a nice cup of tea and a lie down.

IT'S JUST LIKE A WARGAME, REALLY

This is where you plan your campaign (or let the computer plan it for you if you prefer). And yes, it is all terrifyingly complicated and won't appeal to many people.

This, believe it or not, is the game's 'main menu'. From here you can go to the battle planning room, the briefing room or the flight deck, and you can read messages and things. (It's almost as if they've deliberately set out to make my job harder...)



Here's a map of Timor, an island near Indonesia where, for some ineffable reason, the whole game is set. You're trying to stop the Indonesian armed forces from invading the island. (Exciting, eh?)

AV-8B HA

There'll come a time when almost everyone will have released a Harrier sim.

There's always quite a bit to concentrate on.

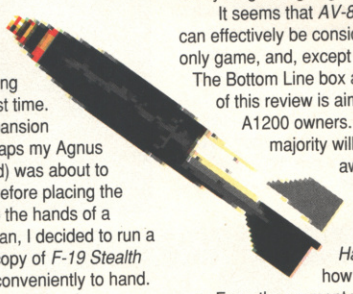
Game: AV-8B Harrier Assault
Publisher: Domark
Authors: Simis
Price: £39.99
Release: Out now

The Amiga A1200 is a brilliant idea. We can still have lots of fun playing Amiga A500 games, just like in the good old days – the A500's a great machine, after all, capable of great things. But now, for the lucky few, those same games can take advantage of the A1200's extra speed and graphical trickery to kick in new features, better visuals and slicker gameplay. And on top of that, A500 owners would be unlikely to begrudge A1200-owners the odd A1200-only game, doing things the old A500 could only dream of. Yup, everyone's happy. Isn't progress a wonderful thing? *(Er, I think you'd better have a go on* AV-8B Harrier Assault. *– Ed)*

The Amiga A1200 is a brilliant idea. In the old days, if you'd just spent ages writing a game only to find that, whether through over-ambition, carelessness or sheer incompetence, it ran at too slow a speed to be playable, you'd have to either improve it till it worked properly or go back to the drawing board. Now you can just stick a label saying 'Amiga 1200 recommended' on the box and go and see what's on telly.

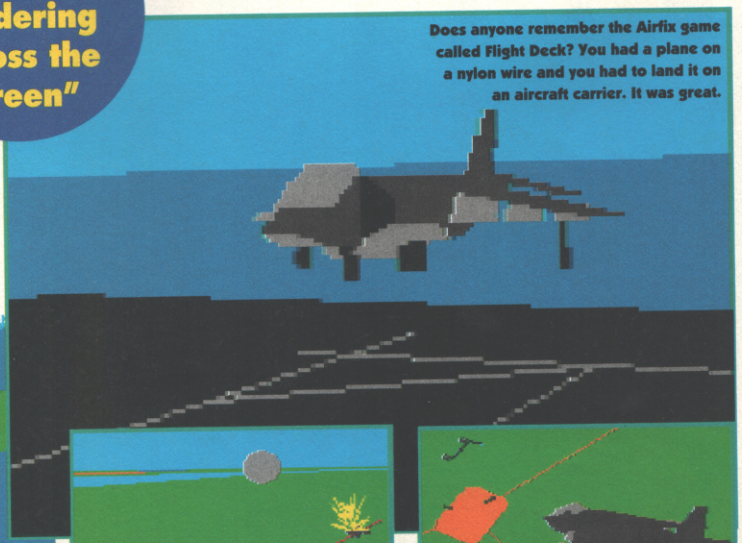
The first time I loaded up *AV-8B Harrier Assault* on my trusty A500, I wondered whether there was something wrong with the old machine. Polygons were juddering across the screen at an appallingly slow rate. Lines were lurching past my eyes as if the world was about to end. The keyboard was deliberating for whole seconds at a time before answering my requests. And all this despite the absence of anything on the screen except the sky, my AV-8B Harrier, a pyramid-shaped mountain and a squiggly line that I think was meant to be a road. I panicked. What could be wrong? Perhaps my power supply was failing – it wouldn't be the first time. Perhaps my RAM expansion had come adrift. Perhaps my Agnus (or whatever it's called) was about to breathe its last. But, before placing the whole sorry mess into the hands of a qualified technician, I decided to run a quick test. A copy of *F-19 Stealth Fighter* fell conveniently to hand. I loaded it up and... phew. Normality was restored. An aircraft carrier steamed majestically past beneath the moon-lit sky. Whole cities glided effortlessly across the screen. Everything was going to be all right.

"Polygons were juddering across the screen"

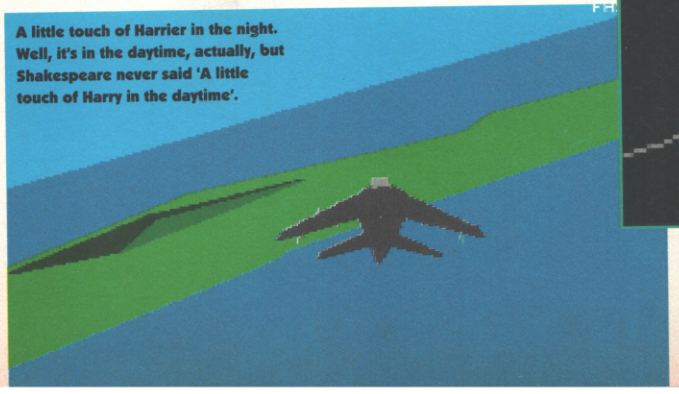


It seems that *AV-8B Harrier Assault* can effectively be considered an A1200-only game, and, except for a token blue The Bottom Line box at the end, the rest of this review is aimed solely at A1200 owners. The A500-owning majority will just have to go away. Sorry.

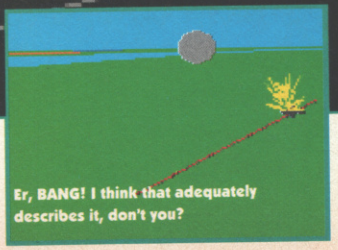
The first thing that'll strike you about *AV-8B Harrier Assault* is how dull the graphics are. From the moment you take off from your rather nondescript, shoe box-shaped



Does anyone remember the Airfix game called Flight Deck? You had a plane on a nylon wire and you had to land it on an aircraft carrier. It was great.



A little touch of Harrier in the night. Well, it's in the daytime, actually, but Shakespeare never said 'A little touch of Harry in the daytime'.



Er, BANG! I think that adequately describes it, don't you?

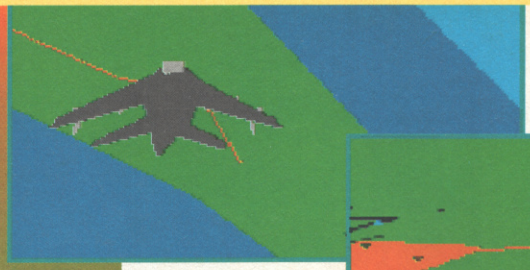
And how about WHOOSH! for this one? I'm getting the hang of this.

RRIER

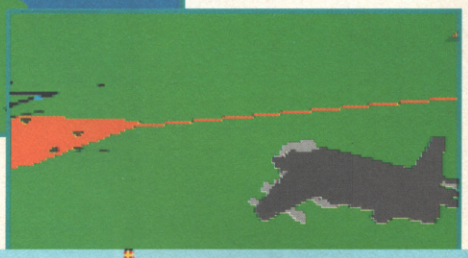
AV-8B Harrier Assault takes a slightly different slant to your usual flight sim. Rather than presenting you with a set list of missions from which you can choose at will, in plonks you straight into the middle of a war, with the clock set to 8.00 am. As the day goes on the need will arise for missions to be flown. (You can 'fast-forward' through the quiet bits if you want.) You're then given the chance to fly the mission – intercepting an enemy plane, say, or stopping some troops from landing – or you can wait for something more to your taste to come along.

This approach has its advantages. It really does feel as if you're in the middle of a conflict (well, sort of, anyway) and strategy buffs will feel right at home – don't be surprised if you return from a mission to find your aircraft carrier is under attack from marauding enemy planes. The huge amount of stuff going on behind the scenes also goes some way towards excusing the graphics from being so crap.

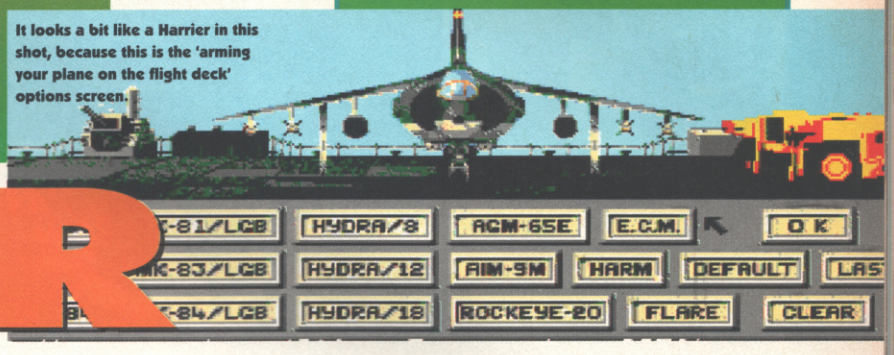
It also has its disadvantages. You can't just load up the game and think: ooh, I fancy a quick dogfight, or hmm, p'raps I'll have another go at blowing up that factory. Nope, you've got to sit there and wait for orders from above. It's also incredibly tedious if you're not into that sort of thing.



Vector 3D needn't look quite so blocky and slow. Unless you're really into it, the lack of quality is off-putting.



Ground targets aren't as easy to identify as you might hope. This tends to make things a little tricky.



It looks a bit like a Harrier in this shot, because this is the 'arming your plane on the flight deck' options screen.

aircraft carrier, to your lengthy journey over the dark blue rectangle that is the sea, to your first combat engagement with a collection of indistinct lines and squares, the over-riding feeling is one of Spectrum circa 1983. In fact, the only really nice-looking graphic in the whole game (that I've encountered, at least) is your Harrier, which looks really Harrier-like.

Sure, everything moves smoothly enough, but so it should running on a 32-bit machine. The A1200 should be capable of throwing ridiculous numbers of polygons around the screen, and maybe texturing and light-source shading them too. *AV-8B Harrier Assault* doesn't even try.

Continuing on this negative note, there are loads of niggly irritations too which, in the light of all this blandness, are all the more difficult to ignore. The first is the front-end through which you've got to wade before you can take to the skies. It's one of those really annoying ones consisting of screens that are meant to represent parts of the aircraft carrier.

To plan a mission you click on a picture of a monitor with a funny-shaped blob on it (of course!), to arm your plane you click on the telephone (it's obvious!), that sort of thing. Only you haven't got a clue what all these wretched pictures mean until you've checked in the manual, a process made all the more arduous by the fact that there are no illustrations in there (except a couple of photos of Harriers).

There are other annoying bits, too, like the way the game keeps asking you to insert disks it's already got, and the controls for the direction of your jet nozzles (you've got to take you hands off the joystick, hold Shift and press one of keys 1-0 – no simple matter in the heat of a battle). There's no 'turn off the crash detection' option – a must when you're learning to fly a plane as fiddly as the Harrier. The effect of trying to use the rudder controls is hilarious. You're supposed to get a debriefing when you land, telling you how you got on, but it wouldn't give me one. And the music at the beginning is terrible – Holst courtesy of the Marvellous Mechanical Mouse Organ.

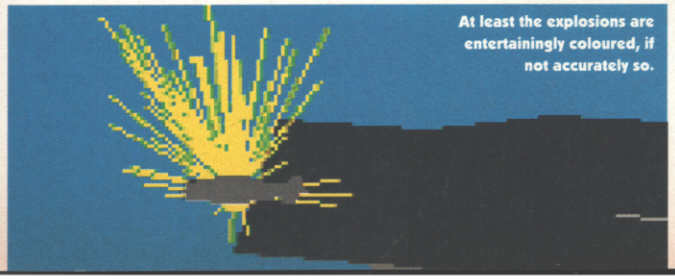
"There are loads of niggly irritations too"

AV-8B Harrier Assault gets a reasonably high score, though, because it is actually a pretty good simulation of the AV-8B Harrier. (At least, I'm prepared to believe it is.) Once you've managed to suppress that horrible feeling that you've just handed over £400 for a new machine so you can play worse games than you did on your old Amiga, it's actually rather good fun. It's not a game you can enjoy playing just for the sake of it – you won't find yourself just flying, seeing where the sky takes you – but if you're prepared to stick to the rule book and follow through the missions it's pretty rewarding. There's a stronger than usual strategy side, too. (Though many people might prefer that sentence to be moved to the end of the previous paragraph.)

It's a simulation for simulation buffs, then, much like the MiG-29 games which Simis were also behind. It takes a lot of getting into, and is really quite absorbing once you do. But it could have been so, so much better.

● *JONATHAN DAVIES*

Carping aside, the cockpit looks suitably impressive in a techy sort of way.



At least the explosions are entertainingly coloured, if not accurately so.

UPPERS As accurate a Harrier simulation as you could hope for. You can do lots of strategy-planning too, and overall the game's got plenty of depth. A1200

DOWNERS As you're doubtless sick of hearing by now, the graphics are very boring, and don't do anything an A500 wouldn't normally be able to do with one hand tied behind its back. That pretty much extends to the rest of the game, too – it's all strictly functional: there are no 'fun bits'.

THE BOTTOM LINE
If you can stand its puritan approach, and the fact that it completely ignores the potential of the machine, you'll get lots of flying hours out of it.

73 PERCENT

UPPERS It does, if you're being pedantic, simulate the Harrier with ruthless accuracy. And there's a lot of game in there.

DOWNERS *Flight Simulation* on the 48K Spectrum was faster than this. And it's not as if it's trying to do much, either.

THE BOTTOM LINE
You'd have to be dangerously obsessed with the idea of a Harrier simulation to get any fun out of this at all. The slow speed and no-frills approach hopelessly outweigh its good points.

47 PERCENT

A quick bout in the USA – these guys travel all over the world to kick each other's heads in.

STREET FI

Waggling his smelly foot in Ryu's face, Honda succeeds in disorientating his opponent.

Game: Street Fighter II
Publisher: US Gold
Authors: Creative Materials
Price: £27.99
Release: Out now

"I reckon you're going to be impressed with this"

There's a great bit in this game where Guile (super-butch bequiffed Vietnam veteran in combat trousers) kicks lumps out of petite-but-deadly Chinese babe Chun Li. As our powerfully-thighed heroine lies bleeding on the ground, Guile runs manly, if bruised, fingers through his impressive hair and sneers at the humiliated figure on the ground. 'Go home and be a family man,' he growls. The clot.

Perhaps surprisingly, though, that's just about the biggest cock-up we've found in a couple of days of extensive playtesting of the long-awaited Amiga version of *Street Fighter II*. Since this coin-op conversion was announced, arcade devotees, SNES owners and plain old-fashioned cynics alike have been expressing serious doubts over the possibility of the original's impressive graphics and six-button control mechanism making a successful journey onto the 'humble' Amiga, but now it looks like a fair old amount of words are going to have to be eaten. It's not a perfect conversion by any means, but it doesn't do a half-bad impression of the £65 SNES game, and that'll be more than enough to make your Nintendo-owning chums feel just a little ripped-off.

So let's take a closer look. We've got a fair old mix of players here at AP – there's me, who thinks *Street Fighter II* as a game is good fun, but one of the most over-hyped and over-rated games in recent memory, and there's Mark who just thinks beat-'em-ups are crap full stop. Then there's the new Mark, who really likes the arcade and SNES versions of the game, and the new Tim who's one of those people who thinks *SFII* is the greatest thing since sliced bread. Finally, we've got the old Tim, who was a complete *Street Fighter* virgin until the Amiga game showed up, and who we're going to use as a sort of experimental control. And, just because this is such a big game for once we're going to be flawlessly democratic. Everyone's going to get their say, then at the end of it we're going to take the five individual marks and award the final percentage as a straight average. Blimey.

After months of

MR: This kind of thing's not usually my cup of tea, and it's pretty limited compared to the likes of *Final Fight*, but it's got a certain something and it's one of the better two-player games around. It's certainly got the flavour of the original, and it's worth a good 75% in my book.

MW: My general view of it is that you just help the players along and don't really control them. There's too much context-sensitivity in the control – the whole point of the original was being able to learn the moves, and just waggling the stick and hitting fire a lot loses most of that skill. I'd say about 65%.

TT: Inevitably there's less control than on the arcade version *(I don't think it was inevitable at all. – MW)*, but it still manages to feel like you're in control to a certain degree, retains the flavour of the original,

Everybody hates Dhalism. He's weird and he sets fire to you.

I don't know about you but I'm cheering for Chunners, the cute Chinese chick.

Two fat blokes have a ruck on the streets of China, and Blanka's had too much Ready Brek by the looks of it.

GHTER II

waiting, the most fiercely hyped game has arrived.

The classic fight is of course Ryu versus Ken, and that special move works like a dream.

and fans of the coin-op will certainly appreciate it. I'd give it 78%.

TN: I fully expected to hate it, and was quite surprised when I didn't. It's still not much fun as a one-player game, though, but in two-player mode it's pretty good. Overall, I'd go for 76% or thereabouts.

And as Mike Yarwood would say, this is me. The first impression you get when you load this up is 'Urgh, cheapo graphics or what?' This doesn't last long, though – after a while you get used to the unsubtle colouring, and the backdrops are very pretty, although they lack the nicer bits of animation from the other versions (like the cyclists on Chun Li's stage, for example) and the parallax scrolling. While the manual claims the game has redefinable keyboard control, it doesn't tell you how to use it, and after two days of trying to define myself a set of keys I'm still completely stumped.

In fact, the manual in general is almost completely without practical use, but luckily the fighting moves are fairly easy to get to grips with by just experimenting a bit. That said, you never get to feel 100% in control – in order to keep as many of the coin-op's moves as possible, the programmers have had to employ a large degree of context-sensitivity into the control system, which means you can never be certain that you're going to pull off a particular move when you really want to.

Also, on the characters whose special moves involve anything more complicated than up and down movements of the stick, you'll have such a hard time persuading them to do 'em that your opponent will more than likely kick you to death before you can manage to send a single burst of Yoga Fire (or whatever) in his direction. As I recall, that was a bit of a problem even on the SNES version, but never quite as insurmountable as it is here – in two days of trying, I didn't manage to pull off Dhalsim's special moves once.

The two weirdos meet and contort together.

The game comes on four disks, with a lot of swapping whenever you change venue or encounter one of the three bonus games, but since *SFII* is by its nature a very stop-start kind of game, that's not as much of a bugbear as it might have been.

In solo mode, you'll complete it the day you buy it and, as with any game, the compulsion to play through again at a tougher setting is pretty minimal.

Enough quibbling. If you're a *Street Fighter II* fan, and it seems everyone is these days, I reckon you're going to be impressed with this. It feels like the real thing, it looks more or less like the real thing, and it sounds – well, it sounds a bit crap, actually, but you can't have everything, can you? I'd give this about 76% personally, and that's about 40% more than I thought it was going to be worth. Not bad.

● *STUART CAMPBELL*

UPPERS Apart from the colours and the missing animations, the graphics are pretty faithful to the original. There are several control methods so you should be able to find one that suits you, and even the single-fire-button one works a lot better than you might have expected. Most importantly of all, though, it should keep *WWF 2* off the No1 spot...

DOWNERS The manual makes working out the controls a real effort, though, and there's still quite a big element of just pummelling the fire button, waggling the stick, and hoping for the best. The scrolling's jerky, the sound's weedy, accessing some of the special moves is nigh-on impossible, and the 32-colour graphics look a little tacky.

THE BOTTOM LINE

None of the above are crippling flaws, and the, er, classic *Street Fighter II* gameplay remains unchanged, which is to say that this is rapidly dull as a one-player game, but near-endless fun in two-player mode. Realistically, Amiga *SFII* is just about as good as it ever could have been.

PERCENT 74

EVERYBODY WAS KUNG-FU FIGHTING

Guile is a scary guy. He's the type who leaves school early to join the army, then gets chucked out for excessively violent behaviour.

Mid fight, and suddenly goes into his Bono impression. Chunners responds by miming with an imaginary guitar.

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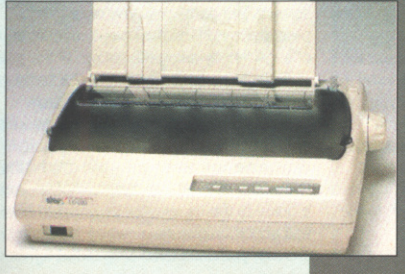

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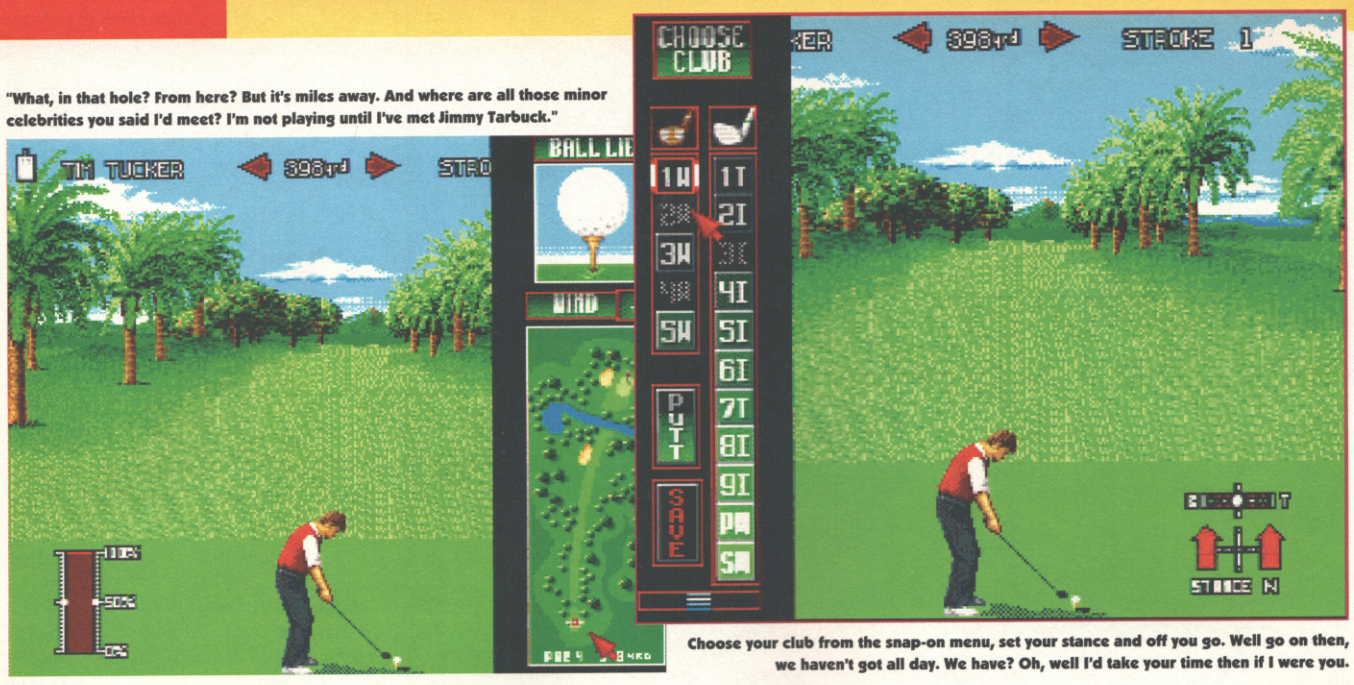
"What, in that hole? From here? But it's miles away. And where are all those minor celebrities you said I'd meet? I'm not playing until I've met Jimmy Tarbuck."



Choose your club from the snap-on menu, set your stance and off you go. Well go on then, we haven't got all day. We have? Oh, well I'd take your time then if I were you.

NICK FALDO

Grandslam would like to offer you a round or two with Europe's top golfer.

Game: Nick Faldo's Golf
Publisher: Grandslam
Authors: Andrew Perkins (design and code), Gary Tonge (graphics and design), Jamie Moore (course design), Andrew McGinty (music and sound)
Price: £34.99
Release: Out now

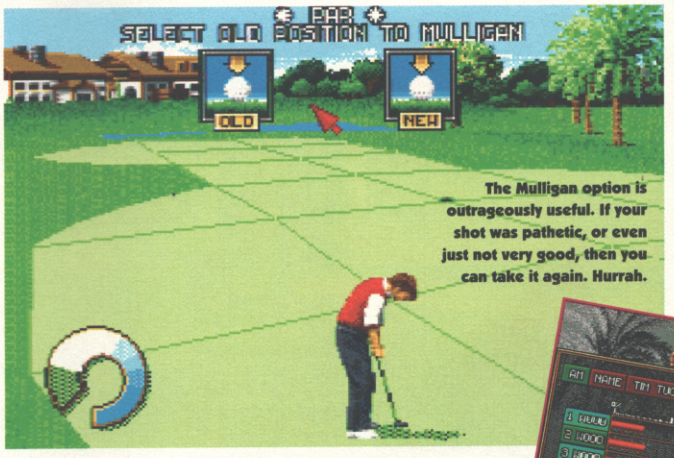
My knowledge of golf, I'm afraid to say, stretches to pitch and putt, crazy golf at the seaside and watching the odd game on BBC2 when there's nothing on the other side. For me its most distinguishing feature is that it's the only game in which you'll see Jimmy Tarbuck pitted competitively against Sean Connery. Surreal. And surely the weirdest job in the world is commentating on it for TV. "He's approaching the ball now – he's hit it... what a glorious shot". Yeah, right.

So what's its appeal? It's obviously a very relaxing game, because you never have to run or anything. You just kind of stroll around these, er, fields trying to find some ball you hit about twenty minutes ago. There's always some caddy with you to chat to, and the professionals don't even have to walk, they get driven around. And what about those clothes? Golf has to be largely responsible for some of the most hideous fashions ever to have graced this planet – you know the shoes with the tassles on, the Argyle tank tops – ugh. And when it finally reaches what might be loosely called a climax, everyone huddles around the green while the player makes his shortest and softest shot of the game. Hardly a powerful ending.

The aerial view is good for seeing where you are and what you have to avoid.

None of this sounds like the perfect choice for a sport sim, does it? Even so, here's another golf game for you. It's already got some stiff competition from *PGA Tour Golf* and *MicroProse Golf*. Is it up to the challenge?

There are a number of things that immediately have to be considered when creating a video version of golf, the most obvious being: how is the control system going to work? *Nick Faldo's Golf* goes for an excellent system that feels very natural and easy to get used to.



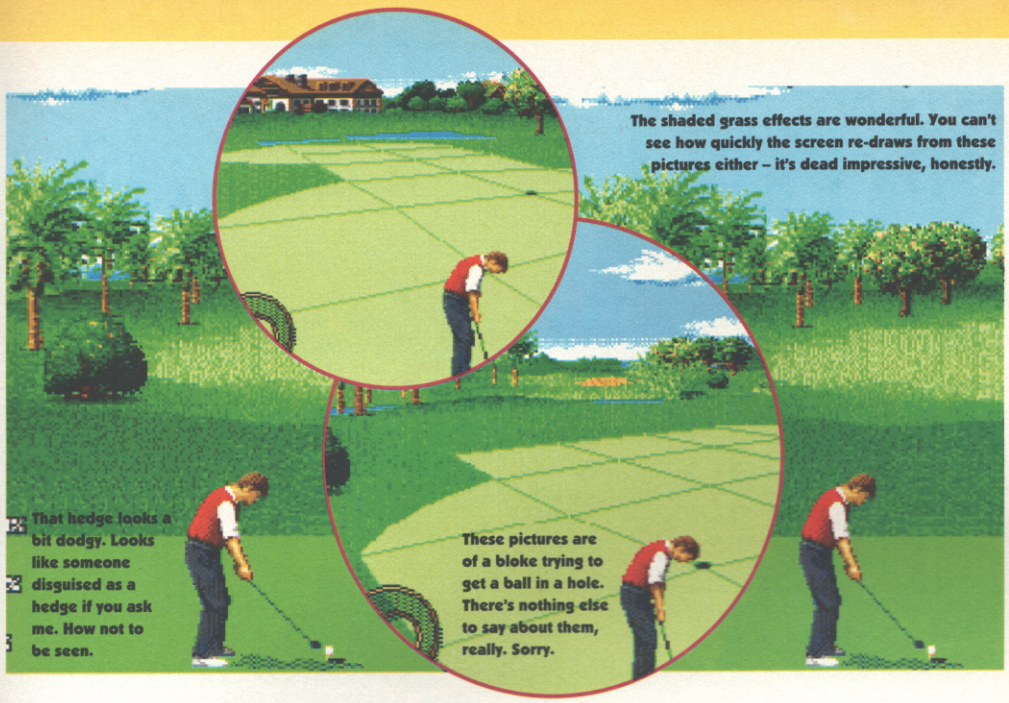
The Mulligan option is outrageously useful. If your shot was pathetic, or even just not very good, then you can take it again. Hurrah.

Choose your weapons please, gentlemen. And you might want the amateur option.

AFORE YE GO

Before you take your shot you check where you are on the course using the snap-on menus – simply move the pointer to the right hand edge of the screen and the menu appears there. This tells you where you are on the course, how the ball's lying (ie resting on top of the grass, buried in the rough or whatever) and the direction the wind's blowing. At the top of the screen you're given the distance to the hole in yards.

Bearing all this in mind you choose the appropriate club from the other snap-on menu to the left of the screen. The game puts you on a perspective to face the hole, but you can change this by using the arrows at the top of the screen. At the bottom of the screen you have icons for altering your stance (closed, open or normal), backspin and top spin control and a bar display for you to determine how hard you're going to hit the thing. The manual very helpfully gives you a guide to the usual clubs required to hit a ball at certain distances, which is handy if, like me, you don't even know what a five



The shaded grass effects are wonderful. You can't see how quickly the screen re-draws from these pictures either – it's dead impressive, honestly.

That hedge looks a bit dodgy. Looks like someone disguised as a hedge if you ask me. How not to be seen.

These pictures are of a bloke trying to get a ball in a hole. There's nothing else to say about them, really. Sorry.

O'S GOLF

iron looks like.

There's a little white cross on the screen which you place with the mouse to indicate the direction you wish to hit the ball. Finally, you move the cursor to the feet of the player sprite and click once. A bar appears on the screen and a level indicator moves through the bar. There are two zones on the bar, one for the wrist snap and the other for the swing itself. In the wrist snap zone you have to click once as the bar passes through it to add an extra 10% power to your shot. This is best not attempted until you get the hang of the control system. The next zone is larger and requires a double click, after the second of which your man takes his shot.

If you put one of the clicks either side of the zone you get a hook or a slice.

Now I know what you're thinking, that it all sounds very complicated and tiresome, but this definitely isn't the case. It all becomes second nature very quickly, and although it takes a little time to play any really good shots you'll soon be competent and ready to start improving your game. And there're some neat extras in the game to help you improve without having to embarrass yourself with a 39 on a par 4.

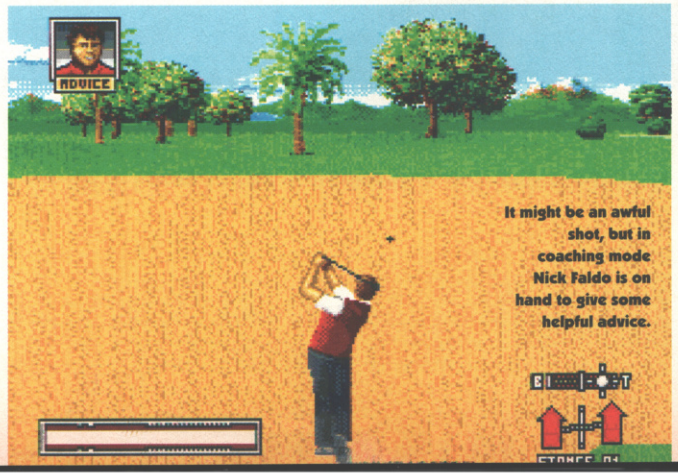
First off there's the coaching mode. Here you get some fab tips from Nick Faldo himself and also get a chance to try some really tricky situations which you'll encounter in a real game, like bunker play, water hazard, putting and windy conditions. You can click on the picture of smiling Nick to get some advice on what club to use, how to approach the shot etc. It's worth starting in amateur mode, because not only is it easier (you get a bigger zone to double-click in when taking a shot), but you also get a Mulligan option, which lets you take the shot again if it was crap. Very handy.

You can play two types of game, stroke play or match play. There can be up to four players, either human or computer, and on the computer side there are eight opponents, from the less-than-average Davey Divot to the superlative and eponymous Nick Faldo. You can choose between one of the two courses, which are designed using professional course design techniques (it says here), and the season you want to play in. All this gives a good deal of variety to the game.

"It's such a dream to play"

Oh dear, I've been wibbling on about how you play it and how it works, and I don't think I've really made it clear how good the game is. It's such a dream to play – the control system feels natural, the graphics are lush and it's fast, with no long screen re-draws to sit through. It succeeds in being not only an accurate simulation of the game, but also a lot of fun even if you've only ever driven past a golf club. It'll last a long time too – once you've mastered the control system in amateur mode, you've still got the professional mode, and the wrist snap won't be possible until you've advanced a little in the game. Even then there are all sorts of variations to try – like playing in different weather conditions. A great game, highly recommended.

● *TIM TUCKER*



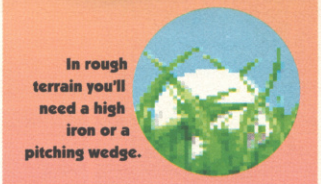
It might be an awful shot, but in coaching mode Nick Faldo is on hand to give some helpful advice.

LIES, DAMNED LIES

Tee shots are simple – whack it as hard as you can in the right direction.

On the fairway is fine. No problem with this one.

In the longer grass might require a high iron to lift it out.



In rough terrain you'll need a high iron or a pitching wedge.

You'll have to use your sand wedge to get out of those nasty bunkers.

A plugged ball. An utter pig to get out, I'm afraid.

UPPERS Superb control system, excellent full screen graphics, and great fun to play. It'll last a mighty long time, and up to four players means your mates can join in too.

DOWNERS Er, very little. It would be nice if there were a couple more courses, but Grandslam do say they may bring out data disks with more courses in the future.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The best golf game on the Amiga, and one which will appeal to golf fans as well as those who know nothing about it (like me). It's accurate enough to be a good simulation, but it doesn't bog you down with it all. Go out and buy this one, you won't regret it.

88 PERCENT

JUST TRYING TO EARN AN HONEST KRUST

KRUSTY'S FUN HOU

Game: Krusty's Super Fun House
Publisher: Acclaim
Authors: Audiogenic
Price:
Release: Out now

Jolly clowns, dirty rats and the world according to Bart.

Look, what's this bloody game actually called? On the NES, Game Boy etc it's *Krusty's Fun House*. On the Super Nintendo it's exactly the same game but it's called *Krusty's Super Fun House*, for the perfectly acceptable reason that, by some bizarre law, every game ever released on the Super Nintendo has to have the word 'Super' in the title somewhere. The Amiga version is exactly the same as every other one, but it gets a 'Super' as well, despite there being nothing in any way remotely 'Super' about it as opposed to the plain old *Krusty's Fun House* jobs.

Yep, I'm struggling a bit for investigative outrage this month, but it's stupidly irritating all the same. Sticking a gratuitous superlative onto something's name doesn't actually make it the least bit better – it's something we don't hold with here at SUPER AMIGA MEGAPOWER, so let's have less of it, okay?

In *Krusty's Super Fun House* you take on the persona of Krusty The Klown, circus icon and hero of one Bart Simpson. Unfortunately, he's an icon with a problem – his Fun House is full of mischievous rats,

This is a mysteriously snake-filled secret level that you can only reach when you've completed level three.

This stage conceals the means to enter the bonus section (that bit over to the right). Find the magic ball and go for a bit of an explore.

Left: Top comedy action as Krusty teeters precariously at the edge of a block above a dangerous viper. Middle: Careful block placing allows Krusty to create a pathway to doom for some cute furballs. Right: Finding a secret room, lucky Krusty jumps for joy.

and he's got to get rid of 'em. Easy, you might think – just give 'em some chocolate and bits of carrot, get their trust, learn to treat them as friends and ask them politely if they wouldn't mind keeping their heads down when the customers arrive. No problem. Well, that's what I'd do, but not Krusty – he enlists the help of the starstruck Simpson and his family, and sets out to kill the furry little loves. *(Disease-ridden filthy rodent scum. – Ed)*

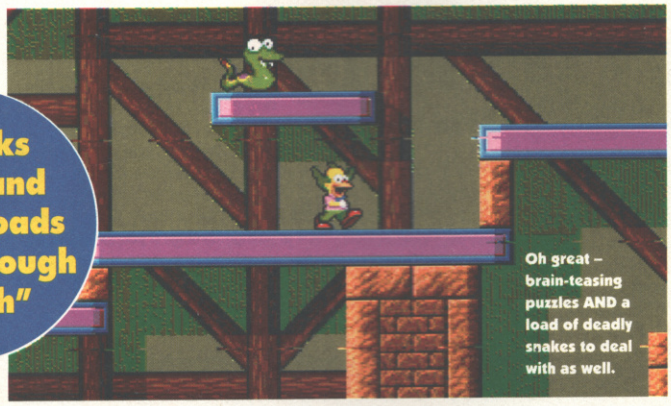
To be honest, I'm completely the wrong person to be reviewing this game. Most of the time when you're playing something, you identify with your character, you help him through his struggles, and you get a warm rewarding glow of satisfaction when you achieve one of his goals. Playing *Krusty's 'Super' Fun House*, though, all I could think of was that if I worked out the solution to a particular level, lots of lovely little rats were going to get horribly murdered, and it really shot my motivation to bits. Still, life, eh?

Ever the professional, I plugged away all the same. After all, I did manage to play the Super Nintendo version quite a bit (by pretending that the rats were actually hamsters or guinea pigs or some other crap rodent) and found it to be pretty entertaining (for a while at least), so it wasn't too difficult to bear. This is relevant, of course, because the Super Nintendo and Amiga versions of the game are completely indistinguishable from each other, so if you've already seen the SNES one, you don't need this review. Er, go and watch TV or something.

Actually, that's not completely true. When the Amiga's Krusty scrolls either horizontally or vertically, it's smoother than the cream in, er, a cream cake, but when it tries both at once (like when Krusty walks diagonally up some stairs) you can really see the cracks in the programming – there's a nasty judder which, when combined with the garish, complex-patterned, parallax-scrolling backdrops, can make for some real visual torture. Still, diagonal scrolling isn't something there's that much call for in the game, so it's not a serious flaw or anything, it's just a bit crap.

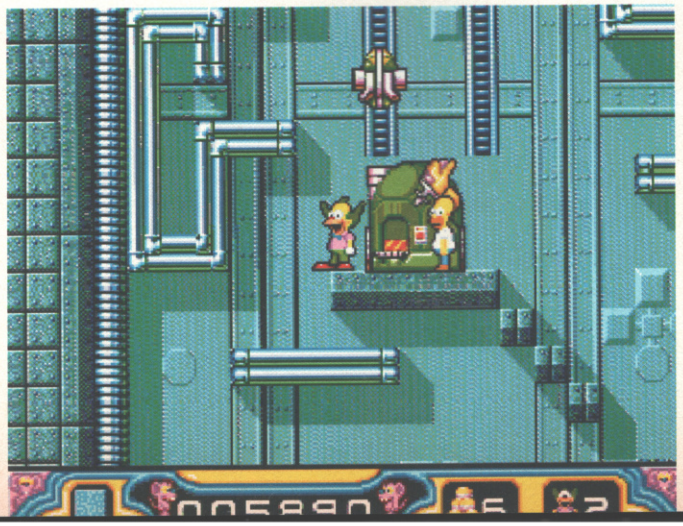
What's more of a serious flaw is the game's password system. *Krusty's 'Super' Fun House* is divided into 5 levels. Each level consists of a number of individual stages (there are 60 stages overall), which can be tackled in any order, except than in some instances, some of the stages are inaccessible until you've completed a certain section of another stage.

"It looks lovely and there's loads of it to plough through"



Oh great – brain-teasing puzzles AND a load of deadly snakes to deal with as well.

SUPER
USE

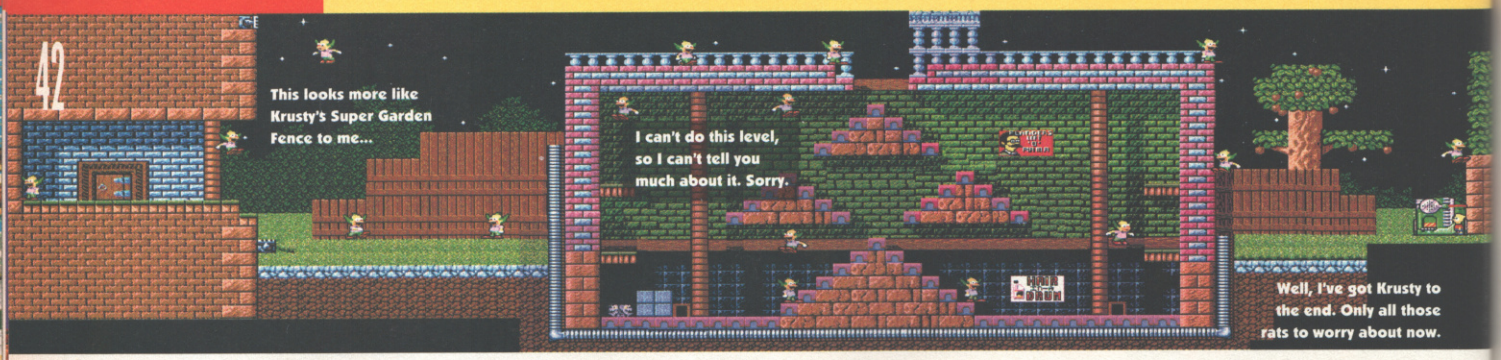


Right: Level two introduces Homer Simpson and his fabulous anti-rat laser machine. Below: The evil pair of psychopathic scumbags demonstrate the evil device in operation.

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

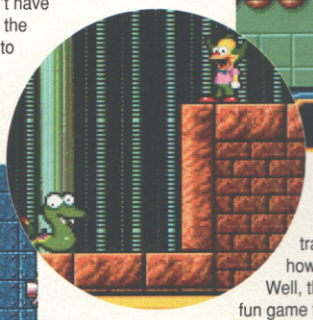
Now all this is fine and dandy, but you don't get a password until you've completed an entire level. This isn't a problem at first, but after level one you find that you've seen pretty much everything the game's got to offer. This wouldn't be so bad but for the fact that you have to do so much at a time before you get another password. When I started playing, I zipped through level one, fairly enjoying myself, then got to level two (logically enough).

I made speedy progress, largely because I knew what I was doing on most of the screens (from playing the SNES game), but by about three-quarters of the way through I'd got to a point where I was so frustrated and annoyed with the game (I'll come to exactly why in a minute) that I'd have done almost anything at that point except continue playing. Unfortunately, I couldn't stop, or all the time and effort



expended in completing the previous seven stages would have been completely wasted, so I had to keep at it, with the result that I gradually began to utterly detest the bloody thing. A password even half-way through the level would have made it a hundred times more bearable.

So what was it that was so frustrating, then? Well, it's like this. The levels of the Fun House are pretty sizeable chaps, and it's not always easy to see what's going on in them without an awful lot of trekking around exploring. This gets to be a bit silly by the middle of level two, when there are loads of pipes all over the shop, disappearing off the screen in areas you can't actually get to without trailing all the way round the stage. Of course, when you've done that, you can't see the bits where the pipes start, and they all look the same so you can't tell 'em apart, so you forget which one you were trying to follow, and you have to do it all over again. The challenge in this game is in trying to work out how to circumnavigate each problem, it shouldn't be in trying to see exactly what the problem is in the first place. A map facility wouldn't have actually made the stages easier to solve, but it would have made the game a whole lot friendlier to play. As it is, you get disillusioned and annoyed, rather than just perplexed, and the game's appeal diminishes rapidly.



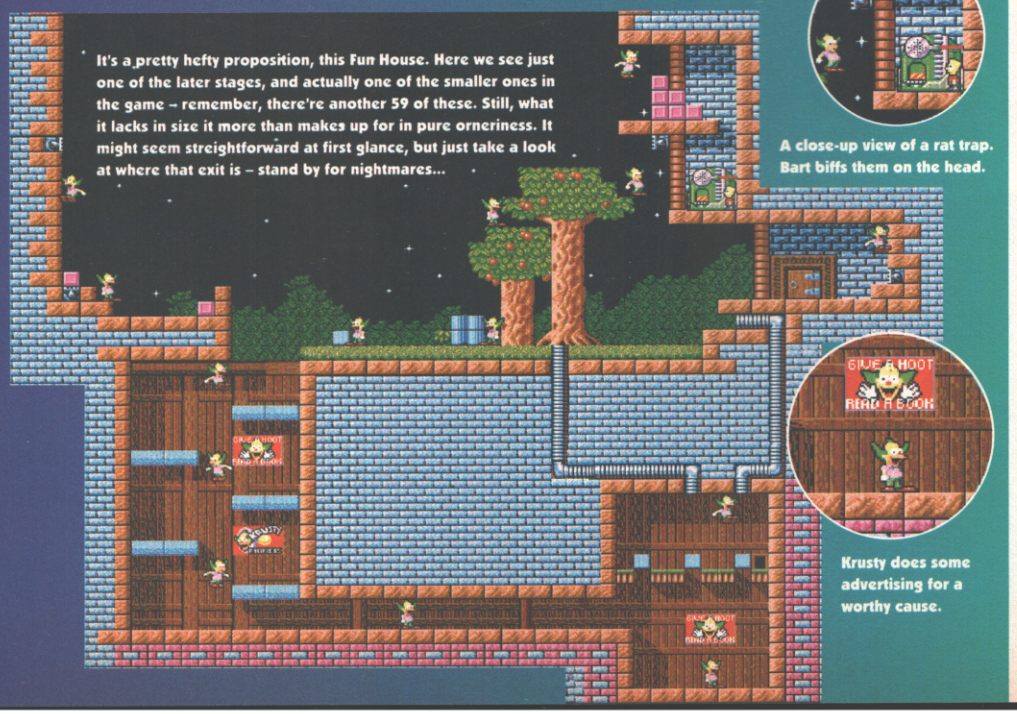
A snake waits in puzzlement to evolve some legs. Or stilts.

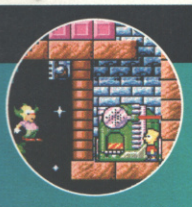
So that's the traditional griping over with, now how about a bit of critical balance? Well, there's no denying that this is a fun game to play, and most of the puzzles are actually really well thought-out once you manage to ascertain what they actually are. It looks lovely, there's loads of it to plough through if you DO have the patience of a saint, and the arcade platforming element is pitched at just the right level, being enough of a feature to keep things interesting when you're just trekking around looking for stuff rather than scratching your head over a puzzle, but not intrusive enough that you get infuriatingly bogged down trying to actually do what you've just painstakingly worked out as the solution to something (a flaw which was a serious pain in the bum in *Shadow Of The Beast III*).

It's just a shame that, for the sake of a couple of tiny little additions, what could have been one of the best puzzle games around gets relegated to the 'sadly flawed' stakes instead. I really hate it when that happens.

● *STUART CAMPBELL*

DON'T BOTHER, THEY'RE HERE





A close-up view of a rat trap. Bart biffs them on the head.

Krusty does some advertising for a worthy cause.

UPPERS Lovely bright graphics, and some cleverly brain-teasing puzzles mixed up well with moderately demanding platform-leaping. Krusty's laugh is sweet, too.

DOWNERS Some jerky scrolling, and the gameplay gets very repetitive and frustrating by halfway through the second level. Having to traipse around for hours just to find the layout of each level is a real pain – a map facility would have made all the difference, as would a two-button joystick option to avoid having to jump with 'up', which doesn't work as well as it should. And rats are lovely.

THE BOTTOM LINE

At first this is really nice to play, but it doesn't take nearly as long as it should to become pretty tiresome. Good fun to pick up now and again, but the passwords are just a little too far apart for that.

74 PERCENT

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HIST

Can a game based

Game: History Line
Publisher: Blue Byte
Price: £34.95
Authors: Lothar Schmitt, Ralf J Kraft, Bernhard Ewers, Thomas Häuser
Release: Out now

The sixth *History Line* scenario takes you into 1915 and the introduction by the French of Voisin bombers, which are rather handy for, er, bombing people, bunkers, artillery, trains, anything really. My French units are spread along the right-hand side of the map, and the objective is to take the German headquarters in the centre on the right. The only trouble is that there are loads of German units in the way, and Jerry Hun has a couple of factories which can churn out new units to replace those that have been lost. It's a bit of a pig this one. Oh, and by the way, if you were wondering, the password for this scenario is BIMBO.

Wargames. A much maligned game genre, and most of the time criticism has been perfectly fair. After all, who wants to squint at reams of statistics for the supposed joy of destroying yet another statistic. Noone in their right mind, that's who. But here's a game that's set to change all that. It's a game about World War I, and what do you know, it's programmed by German developers Blue Byte. Before you say "Well it's bound to be a biased pile of old crap," read the rest of the review.

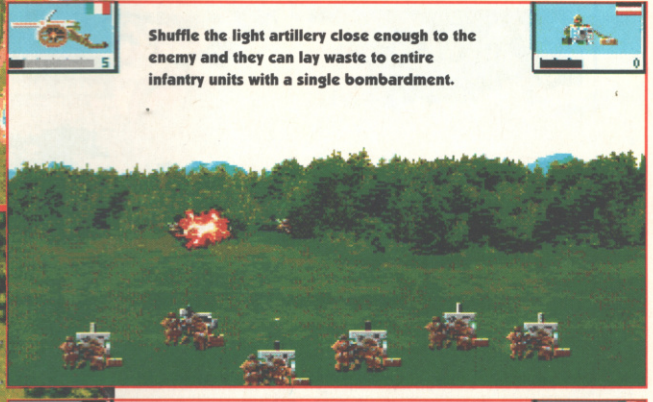
Unlike most wargames, *History Line* is remarkably simple to play. The units can be directed with keyboard or mouse, and a slick control system makes it easy to move and attack. When you're moving a unit, the hexagons which you can't move onto are shaded, so you just select which one you

This is the first naval unit you get your hands on. A pity it's only a transporter.

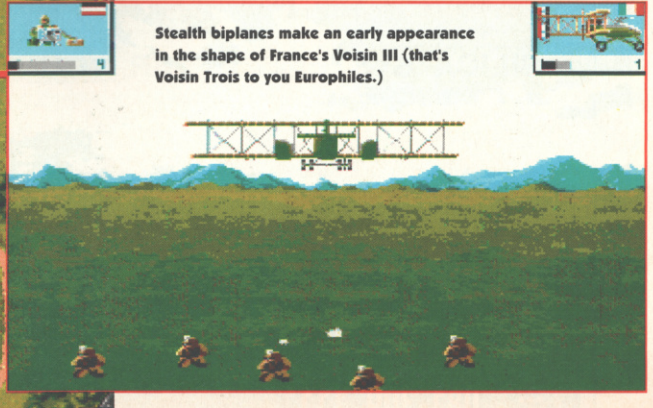
Ordinary infantry are the army's foot soldiers and work horses (or something like that anyway). Sneak them into enemy depots and factories to capture enemy reserves.

The artillery trains are absolutely devastating. Send your infantry too close and expect to see them instantly wiped out.

Not very mobile these bunkers, but they're excellent defensive units. They can stall an enemy attack long enough for you to regroup or to produce some extra units.



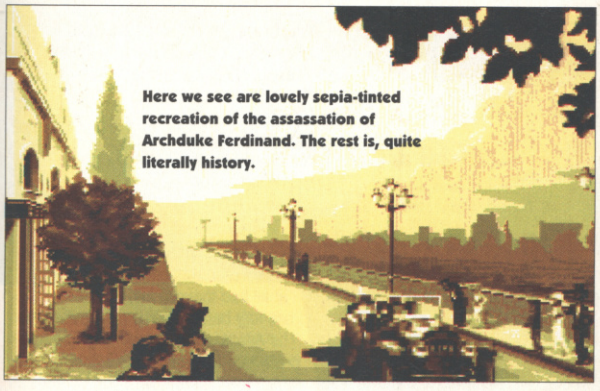
Shuffle the light artillery close enough to the enemy and they can lay waste to entire infantry units with a single bombardment.



Stealth biplanes make an early appearance in the shape of France's Voisin III (that's Voisin Trois to you Europhiles.)

ORY LINE

around the horror of the First World War really be entertaining?



Here we see are lovely sepia-tinted recreation of the assassation of Archduke Ferdinand. The rest is, quite literally history.

And the two sides are squaring up for another battle. In the German corner we have three military bunkers, and in the French corner we have a transport ship with no guns at all.

do want. And when you're attacking, the units which you can attack are highlighted – you just have to choose the one you want. It's a simple, it takes a minute to master, and it's amazing how quickly you become engrossed in the game because of it.

When units engage in battle, you're shown an animation of the conflict, with beautifully drawn graphics depicting the infantry, artillery, armoured cars or trains in action. The outcome of the battle obviously depends on the units involved, and the type of terrain they are on. There are a few nervous moments as you wait to see who loses the most units, but when you're a seasoned pro, you should be able to predict who wins what. But not everything's predictable in *History Line*. As you proceed through the war, new units such as tanks and planes are introduced, and it takes a few turns before you've worked out how best to use them. And as an added interest in the gameplay, you're given a pool of power points which can be used to produce new units – provided you've got your hands on a factory that it is.

There are plenty of people who believe computer games shouldn't tackle such thorny issues as real war. On the one hand there are the pseudo intellectuals who believe computers in general, and games in particular, can't transmit the amount of historical information you need to cover a subject in any depth. Games are too frivolous, too juvenile, to lightweight to breach any serious subjects. And then there are the know-all psychologists who are convinced that computer games glorify war, and that games turn clean-living boy-next-door types into homicidal maniacs who would like nothing better than for there to be a third world war so they can pitch in with Uzis blaring. And then there are some computer gamers themselves who believe that computer games shouldn't touch serious issues because games, after all, are supposed to be fun, and how can a game about World War I be any fun at all?

"A sexy accessible wargame that's fun to play"

When they're up against these sorts of arguments, and these sorts of people, it seems that Blue Byte are on to a loser from the word go. But against all the odds, *History Line 1914-1918* proves them all wrong. What Blue Byte has produced is a sexy, accessible war game that's fun and incredibly engrossing to play. But at the same time it has treated the subject matter with the gravity it deserves. The history is covered in such detail that there's bound to be something in there that you never knew. And as for turning people into war-loving psychopaths, when you repeatedly see your own and the enemy's infantry pounded into submission by enemy artillery, you soon start to think long and hard about whether war is such a good idea after all.

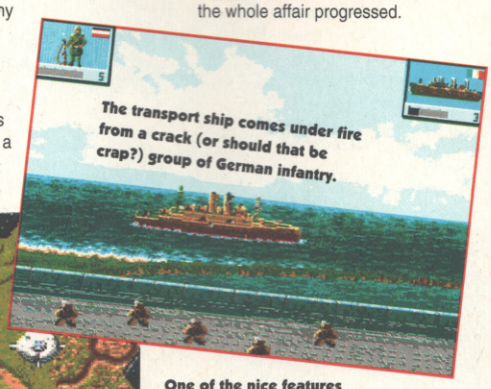
The game does its best to separate you from the worst of the war by not actually recreating specific battles, but you certainly get more than a flavour of how the whole affair progressed.

Round 'em up, put 'em in a field and work the rest out for yourself.

History Line is many things, not least a cracking computer game that should be in everybody's collection. You'll struggle if you haven't got a hard disk, and even twin floppies is a bit of a pain, but by now there should be enough excuses for you to get one, or even to upgrade to an A1200 to play it. (On an A1200 this really flies.)

We've often said that war and strategy games don't need to be the dull; tedious, difficult-to-control games that they often are, and *History Line* proves it. There's so much excitement and absorbing entertainment in here that you can expect to lose yourself in the furore of the First World War for quite some time. It's got class, it's got style, it's got sense, and it's brilliant in two-player mode. What more do you need?

● *RICHARD LONGHURST*



The transport ship comes under fire from a crack (or should that be crap?) group of German infantry.

One of the nice features of *History Line* is that the two players play at once on a split screen. One guy moves his units while the other attacks. The attack begins before the units move, so you do get a chance to hit something.

UPPERS What a brilliant game. Easy control system, beautiful graphics, a great intro and smashing linking scenes. But most importantly, the gameplay is finely tuned to keep you on the edge of the seat, eager to complete a scenario, but just as keen to get on to the next one.

DOWNERS It can become repetitive. Hopeless on a single drive machine.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Can wargames get any better than this? I don't think so, but Blue Byte will try with *Battle Isle 2*.

87 PERCENT

ALIEN3

The atmospheric gore-fest finally makes it to the Amiga courtesy of Probe.

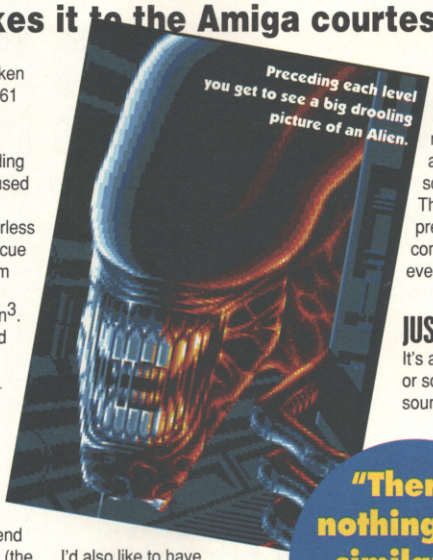
Game: ALIEN3
Publisher: Acclaim
Price: £25.99
Authors: Probe Software – Jo Bonar & Others (Design), Roundey (Code), Lee Ames (Original Sprites), Lloyd Baker & Richard Beston (Original Scenery & Mapping), Jason Green (Amiga Visuals Conversion), Matt Furniss (Sound)
Release: Out Now

Those lovable Aliens have taken over prison colony Fiorino 161 (which is known as Fury because it's not a very nice place to live) and turned it into a breeding ground. Now the prisoners are being used as hosts for Alien eggs.

Enter rock-hard, fearless and hairless Ripley to save the day. She has to rescue the prisoners and waste the Alien scum into the bargain.

The plot's not exactly that of Alien3. Call it artistic licence. Call it a Godsend actually. If the film's distributor, 20th Century Fox, hadn't given Probe permission to use any hardware from the first two films, *Alien3* on the Amiga would have turned out rather dull with a weaponless Ripley running around.

Instead, what we have here is an almost excellent blend of blasting and platform action (the gist of which you'll get from the captions). *Alien3*'s biggest failing is that Ripley's ammunition is limited. When it runs out and you have nothing to fight with, you might as well quit (*Alien Breed*'s the worst culprit for this). It's a cheap way of imposing restrictions.



I'd also like to have seen more periods of intense shooting, especially when the time limit expires after the prisoners have been saved. A fire-fest with Aliens galore running wild would be more fun than having Ripley simply killed off for failing to reach the exit.

Graphics-wise, the Ripley character's a bit ropey (her animation's not at all bad though) and the scenery barely serves a purpose. The Aliens on the other hand look pretty good, even if they're lit by a completely different light-source from everything else.

JUST THE EFFECTS, MA'AM

It's a shame you can only play with music or sound effects. As good as the soundtrack is, it's not enough on its own, and there aren't quite enough sound effects (a few of them are a tad silly actually). Let's just say what's there is adequate.

There are a few neat visual touches worth mentioning, such as Ripley's features illuminated by muzzle flash. *(That's just one neat visual touch, Gary. – Ed)* A two-button joystick is supported, too, though I'd

"There's nothing of a similar ilk that's as playable"

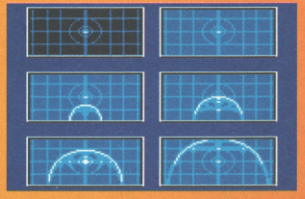
GETTING STARTED

A map of each level is essential. Amiga Power will be printing some in the future, but in the meantime...

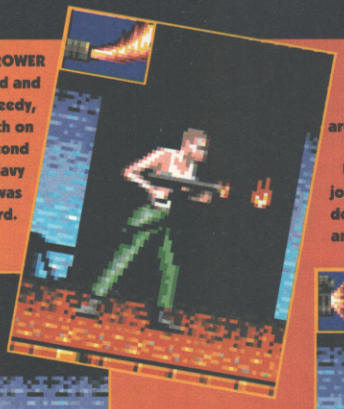
Use the EASY option to practice. You don't get a bonus for it, but at least you can hone your reactions to the Aliens appearing. Ripley will be injured if she slides straight down a long slope. To avoid this, jump on to the slope from the top of it.

HARDWARE

Ripley's armed with a Motion Tracker and four of finest weapons money can't buy. Ammunition is limited, so be frugal with the firepower and keep 'em peeled for supplies.

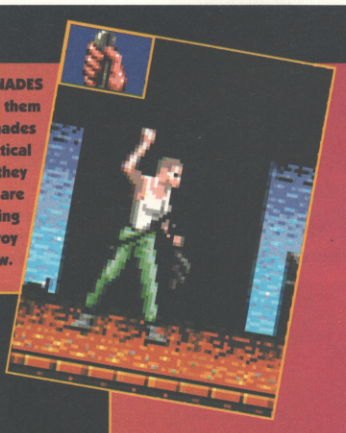


MOTION TRACKER
Stuck in the top right-hand corner of the screen. Aliens appear as white dots while prisoners are shown as yellow blobs. The Tracker doesn't blip (which is a pity as it should have done for extra tension) but it does run out of power and disappear from view after a couple of minutes so you have to pick up a token to get it back.



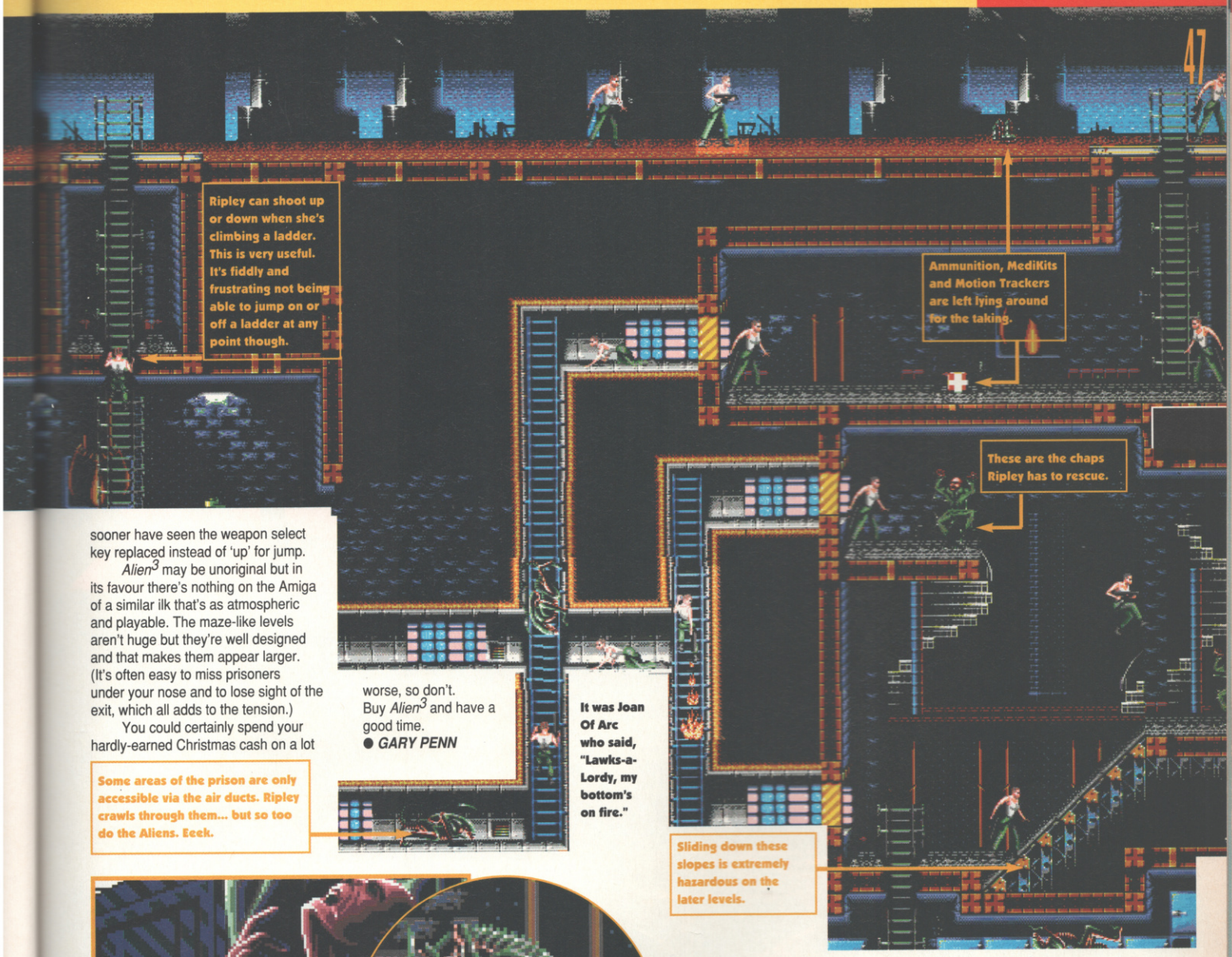
FLAME THROWER
Its range is limited and it looks a bit weedy, too. Not a patch on one in the second section of Navy Moves – that was well 'ard.

PULSE RIFLE
It fires armour-piercing bullets but is the weakest weapon. At least Ripley can shoot on the move.



HAND GRENADES
Ripley throws them (surprise). Grenades aren't the most practical of weapons (they bounce), but they are jolly handy for lobbing down holes to destroy anything Alien below.

GRENADE LAUNCHER
A slow reload but explosive ammunition. Just the thing for blowing open Aliens and doors with a single shot.

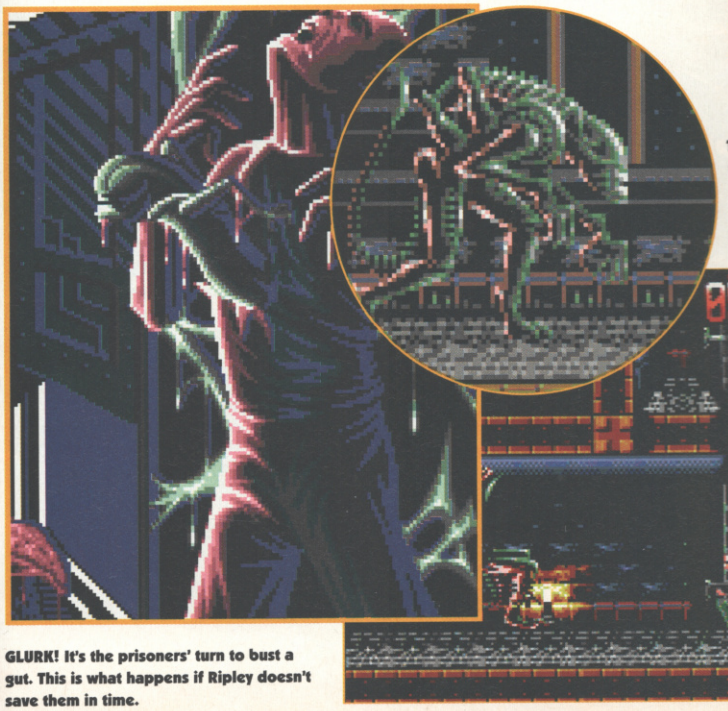


sooner have seen the weapon select key replaced instead of 'up' for jump.

Alien^3 may be unoriginal but in its favour there's nothing on the Amiga of a similar ilk that's as atmospheric and playable. The maze-like levels aren't huge but they're well designed and that makes them appear larger. (It's often easy to miss prisoners under your nose and to lose sight of the exit, which all adds to the tension.)

You could certainly spend your hardly-earned Christmas cash on a lot worse, so don't. Buy *Alien*^{3} and have a good time.

● *GARY PENN*



GLURK! It's the prisoners' turn to bust a gut. This is what happens if Ripley doesn't save them in time.

The bitch is back! We aren't going to tell you where this mean and hard mother appears, but make sure you have a spare pair of pants ready for when she does.

Fun and games in the morgue. But it doesn't look as if anyone's home.

UPPERS Surprisingly tense atmosphere at times. A good feel, too.

DOWNERS Limited ammunition stinks, but everything else smells of roses so that's not as big a downer as it might have been.

THE BOTTOM LINE

A very good quality blast and a decent representation of the Alien films. Recommended.

85 PERCENT

Mike wakes up with a killer headache. Either it was a great party or he's got an embryo in his skull.

Aspirin and a shower make him feel almost human enough to be able to explore his nice new house.

It's a shabby garage, but a classic car. Maybe it'll be some help later. If not he can always twiddle with the radio, that's always fun.

Game: Darkseed
Publisher: Cyberdreams
Authors: Mike Dawson, Mike Cranford, John Krause
Price: £34.95
Release: Out Now

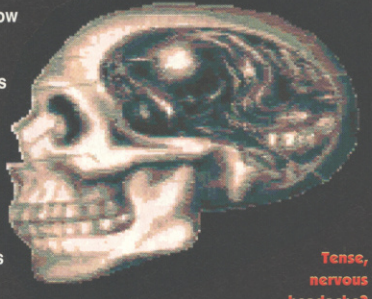
DARKS

We're not usually fans of licences, but not even we can

What exactly is H R Giger's problem? Along with Stephen King, Charles Manson and David Cronenberg, Giger ranks highly in the list of people I'd hate to be stuck with. Take this nightmare situation – It's Friday night and as you hurry out of the office you nip into the lift and... Oh no, it breaks down between floors. You just know that you'll be stuck there all weekend and curse your bad luck when, out of the shadows steps one of the above, one of the four weirdest and probably most disturbed minds of modern times. Take my advice, kill yourself there and then, because by the time the maintenance guy opens up on Monday morning, you'll probably have been peeled and knitted into some kind of ritualistic cloak whether you want to be or not. *(Although, frankly, if you did, I'd get some help if I were you. – Ed)*

For those that don't already know it, H R Giger's a Swiss artist who specialises in producing vast airbrushed works featuring creatures from his imagination. And here lies his problem. I'm sure he's a really great guy, but what ends up on the canvas is undeniably the product of an unusually twisted mind. A typical Giger pic contains skulls, guns, hypodermic syringes, deformed children and vast amounts of bodily parts usually confined by Marks and Spencers undergarments and generally left out of polite conversation. This eclectic blend is usually fused together so that it's hard to tell where, or indeed if, the machines end and the bodies begin. Giger was the first person to coin the word Biomechanics for this fusion, and the the world first became aware of this obscure surreal painter when he won an Academy award for his designs of alien creatures and spacecraft for the classic 1977 movie 'Alien'.

So that's the art history lesson over with, and it's on to what this has to do with games. Cyberdreams have come up with *Darkseed*, a game based on the artwork of Giger, and one that saw the light of day on the PC earlier this year. Cyberdreams have started up



Tense, nervous headache?

"Plunged into a no-holds barred Gigerthon"

You know your sanity is on the blink when this sort of thing happens and, as the game progresses, it happens a lot. Book me the rubber room for next Thursday, nurse.

Meanwhile, down in the town, Delbert arranges a meeting while the shop keeper looks strange, odd, bizarre and generally 1950-ish.

'I don't want to be buried in a pet cemetery.' So sang the Ramones, about a place similar to this one.

Even the spooky paintings on the wall are by Giger, as Mike takes the plunge. The house could do with a bit of a clean, couldn't it?

KSEED

resist a game which takes its style and inspiration from the master of the gross and macabre.

with the intention of producing serious sci-fi games but, to date, *Darkseed* is all they've done. When the reputation of your company is resting on a single product, it makes sense to lavish as much attention on it as possible, and everything about *Darkseed* has certainly had the five-star treatment.

The box is glossy, black and wedge-shaped but, so that it'll stack regularly, there's a smaller, disk sized box featuring a bizzarro woman tucked into the main bit. It's lush, as is the hints and tips book (available for a limited time only, so get yours quickly, folks) as, indeed, is the game itself.

Do not adjust your TV set then, there's nothing wrong with it. From the moment you start playing *Darkseed* you can rest assured that it's reality that's on the blink. Your game alter-ego is Mike Dawson, which only happens to be the name of one of the games designers, and we see Mike as a character who only happens to be an animated digitised version of the real Mike. In fact, if you look at the credits, you'll find that most of the creative team are featured as characters in the games. And so are their girlfriends, and their ex-girlfriends. And so is Maddeline of Hidden Hills, who's a dog. *(Who, and indeed what, are you on about? – Ed)*

Mike dreams that he's whisked to an alien world where a grotesque foetus is implanted in his brain, to grow and eventually burst out into our world where it'll be the darkseed of the title, the first of a new and frightening race. Scary stuff indeed, and even scarier when he wakes up with a blinding headache in his recently purchased Victorian-style house in Woodland Hills, California. Being by trade a writer, he tries to put all this weirdness down to an active imagination but, like Alice, he finds things just get curiouser and curiouser. Why's the house so quiet, and why will no one come inside? Why was the previous owner so keen to sell so quickly, why hasn't his furniture been delivered yet and what is the significance of the brooding, archaic mirror that seems to suck the heat out of the living room? All these questions, but as Mike soon finds out, he's only got a limited time to unravel all the answers.

The gameplay is that familiar blend of text windows, icon →

The dark world mirrors our own. Here we see Mike's hall, with and without the skull motif. And I'm sorry, but I still say that both worlds could do with a jolly good clean. It's a disgrace.

When programmers go on ego trips, they don't mess around. This is Mike Dawson (programmer) playing the part of Mike Dawson (game character).

Ego tripper? Yes, certainly. Vain? Absolutely no way. Morphing into this hideous apparition doesn't impress the girlies at all. I tried it.

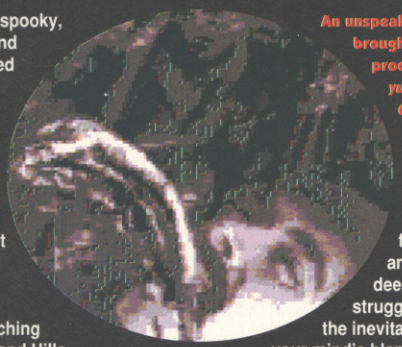
inventories and point-and-click mouse driven control that have become the standard game mechanics of the graphic adventure genre. Although spread over seven disks, swapping is kept to a minimum and is unobtrusive, so overall the mechanics work well and since you'll all have seen this kind of thing in a *Monkey Island* or similar, there's no need to spend any more time on this topic.

All the more space to talk about the game itself, and as you'd imagine from a game sold on its links with an artist and his work, *Darkseed* is a beautiful game to look at, with the frame-grabbed characters and the high resolution backgrounds working together so well that the effect is of watching a film that you control.

There're about 75 locations in the game, with the house taking up a good few, and the eerily quiet town a couple more. The spot sound effects are brilliant and although it's inappropriately boppy at some points, the music adds tremendously to the atmosphere. When you run into other characters, at the library or shop for instance, you're treated to some of the clearest voice samples I've ever heard in an Amiga game, 'Hi, Mr Dawson, your book's just come in','Come round tomorrow, here's my card', that sort of thing. It may seem like amiable chit-chat, but it's all bound to be vitally important sooner or later. Maybe.

"A grotesque foetus is implanted in his brain"

Apart from the occasional dream sequence or morphing baby routine though, there's very little Giger to be seen. Ah yes, but of course I've only talked about the real world, and barely mentioned the other world, the dark world of the aliens and their fiendish weirdness. This is where Giger kicks in with a vengeance, and the palette dives headlong into the blue and grey scale. The effect is stunning, the music goes seriously spooky, and both you and Mike are plunged into a no-holds barred Gigerthon.



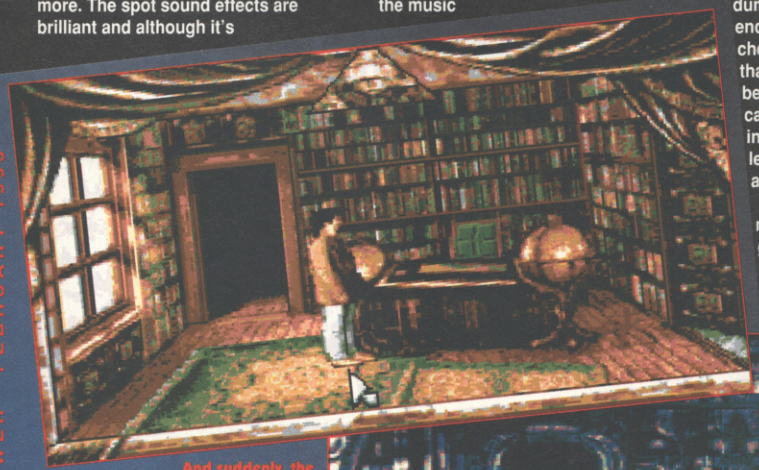
An unspeakable act brought on by procrastination. *(Er, yuck, big time. – Grossed-out Ed)*

When Mike passes into this other world, he discovers that it mirrors the real world, with locations and characters matching those in Woodland Hills. There's even a Dark Fido to mirror the bit-part played by Maddeline of Hidden Hills, about whom I'll quote from the hints and tips manual: "Aroor, aroor. Smack. Watch the passing watching the passing waiting good houndling, good." Er, right.

Obviously both worlds have to be explored in order to solve the problems, and although certain actions in the real world can dump Mike in jail, dumb moves in the dark world tend to end up with him getting his head chewed off. As you play on, you find that this mirroring of locations between the two worlds isn't just a catchy gimmick, but actually an integral part of the game, as objects left in a location in one will appear at the same place in the other.

On to conclusion time, and I've not even spoiled the story by giving too much away. I've got to admit that I'm really impressed with this, even though graphic adventures aren't really my thing. It drops handy hints from time to time and it's suitably deep for you to struggle on through the inevitable times when your mind's blank and Mike's head seems to explode no matter what you do. If Cyberdreams are going to take their time and release only two well-crafted games each year, and if the next releases are going to be as gloriously slick as this one, then these California boys are going to be a welcome addition to the Amiga scene.

● *MARK WINSTANLEY*



And suddenly, the room was transformed from a stuffy old study to a chic bar. Just turn left at the Nth dimension, but do remember not to try this one at home without the supervision of an adult and aid of some heavy duty marigold gloves.

UPPERS An Amiga equivalent of 'Eraserhead meets Videodrome', combining brilliant graphics with creative sound and a suitably bizarre storyline. The sound effects and speech add greatly to the feeling of near-madness as Mike descends into his own very private hell.

DOWNERS Inappropriate music at points detracts from the visuals rather than adding to the atmosphere. There's also an annoying screen flicker on a regular monitor (but not on a high-res monitor) that could lead to headaches, with all the associated paranoia that the game promotes.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Tense, atmospheric and oozing style from every pore, *Darkseed* marks a new use of the graphic adventure genre. With the quips and humour of *Monkey Island* clones replaced with brooding gloom, *Darkseed* is a truly adult affair, bringing computer games in line with modern horror fiction. Be afraid. Be very afraid.

88 PERCENT

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Our first issue! *Eye Of The Beholder, Gods* and *Cybercon III* and the first part of the *Rainbow Islands* player's guide.
On the disk: *Bombuzal* – the complete game!*

2 June 1991
And it just gets better! A giant Bullfrog interview and reviews of games like *Megatraveller* and – yes! – *Monkey Island*!
On the disk: *Kid Gloves* – the complete game!

3 July 1991
You want Core Design, CDTV, *F-15 Strike Eagle II, Deuteros*, and *Toki*? – this is the place to come!
On the disk: *Exile* special world, *Prehistorik* preview, and great PD!*

4 August 1991
The Ultimate Autumn Preview, film games, *Jimmy White's Snooker* reviewed and more!
On the disk: *Beast Busters, The Executioner* & three great PD games!*

5 September 1991
All the new god sims compared. *Lemmings* preview. *Mega lo Mania* reviewed.
On the disk: *Barbarian II* demo, plus five (five!) great PD games!*

6 October 1991
Midwinter II, Cruise For A Corpse, Magic Pockets Rodland and many more reviewed.
On the disk: *Rolling Ronny, Captain Planet, Bullfrogger* and still more!*

7 November 1991
Monkey Island II, Indy Jones previews. *Formula One Grand Prix, Blues Brothers, Lotus II, Robocod* reviewed.
On the disk: *Leander, Video Kid*, plus fabulous PD games!*

8 December 1991
Bumper Xmas hardware guide. *Populous II, First Samurai, MicroProse Golf, Knights Of The Sky.*
On the disk: *Cisco Heat, Elvira Arcade* (one meg), best of PD!*

9 January 1992
Giant FRPG feature, our Games Of The Year. Reviews of *Smash TV, Birds Of Prey* and more!
Double disk: *Knights Of The Sky* training section (one meg) & *Puggles.*

10 February 1992
Spring Game Guide. Reviews of *RoboCop 3, Another World, Leander* and more!
On the disk: PD Special – featuring *Mr Wobbly Leg, Raid* and *Squamble.*

11 March 1992
Mega lo Mania II – diary of a game. Platform games buyers guide. Reviews of *Harlequin, John Madden, Shadowlands.*
On the disk: *Pacific Islands* mission and three PD games!

12 April 1992
Giant Psygnosis preview feature, beat-'em-up guide. Reviewed: *Parasol Stars, Titus The Fox, Vroom .*
Double disk: *Titus The Fox, Project X*, plus *Rome* (one meg only).

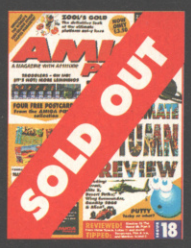
13 May 1992
Anniversary Issue! New AP Top 100, hidden games guide. Reviewed: *Apidya, Project X.*
Double disk: Demos of *Sensible Soccer, Wizkid, Campaign, Pinball Dreams.*

14 June 1992
Footy games preview, joystick guide. Reviewed: *Fire & Ice, Addams, Eye Of The Beholder II, Pushover.*
Double disk: Playable levels of *Legend* and *Aqua Ventura.*

15 July 1992
Reviews! *Wizkid, Sensible Soccer, Monkey Island 2, Lure of the Temptress* and (of course) much more.
Double disk: *Galactic, Amega Race, Number Fumbler,* Mental Image shareware.

16 August 1992
Shoot-'em-up guide. Reviewed: *Crazy Cars III, Links, Civilization, Dojo Dan, Might & Magic !!!.*
Double Disk: *D/Generation Level Two, Troddlers,* and *Locomotion.*

17 September 1992
Pop stars and their games. Guide to multi-player games. Reviewed: *Premiere, Bug Bomber, Fascination.*
Double Disk: *Top Secret, Beast Master, Captain Dynamo.*



18 October 1992
The Ultimate Autumn Preview. Where are they now? Reviewed: *Zool, Putty, Lotus III, Troddlers,* and *Beast III*
On the disk: *Lotus III* and *Tearaway Thomas.*

19 November 1992
Industry giants tell us how far the Amiga can go. Mindscape tell all too. Reviewed: *Assassin, Pool, Doodlebug,* and *Rome AD 92.*
On the disk: *Doodlebug* and *Metamorphosis.*

20 December 1992
Readers' Top 100. 1993 games. Reviewed: *Road Rash, BC Kid, Pinball Fantasies, Kyrandia.*
On the disk: *Lethal Weapon, Fire And Ice Xmas Special, Bill's Tomato Game.*

21 January 1993
Our (second) brilliant year. Is CDTV a Good Thing... or not? Reviewed: *Indiana Jones, Wing Commander, Nigel Mansell, KGB.*
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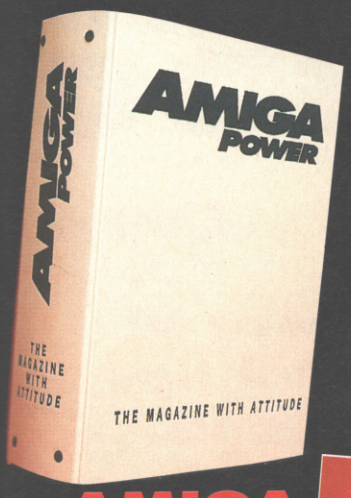

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COMPLETE control

Jonathan Davies, eh? What a guy. He's got more top tips than a stable lad on Derby day. Let's start off with these...

AGONY (Psygnosis)

On the title screen, type FANTASY. The music will become louder to indicate that you've activated the cheat mode. Now during the game you can press
F1 for swords
F3 for extra points and weaponry
F4 for an extra life
And you can do this as often as you like, adds Daniel Winch of Gravesend.

Owls are found world-wide. They are (mostly) nocturnal birds of prey of the order Strigiformes. They eat small mammals.

PINBALL FANTASIES
(21st Century Entertainment)

After pressing F1 to load a table, but before pressing F1 to Start, Rob Howe suggests you type EXTRA BALLS for, er, extra balls and DIGITAL ILLUSIONS to block off the hole at the bottom of the screen.

One of the most famous clowns was Joseph Grimaldi, born in London in1779. He gave his name, 'Joey', to all later clowns.

HUMANS
(Mirage)

Level codes might be bad news for whoever has to type up the tips pages, but they're good news for anyone struggling in the game's early levels. Richard Jenkins of Birmingham is the man to thank for these.

Evidence suggests that Neanderthal man had the necessary bits and pieces in the throat, nose and mouth department to make the sounds of human speech.

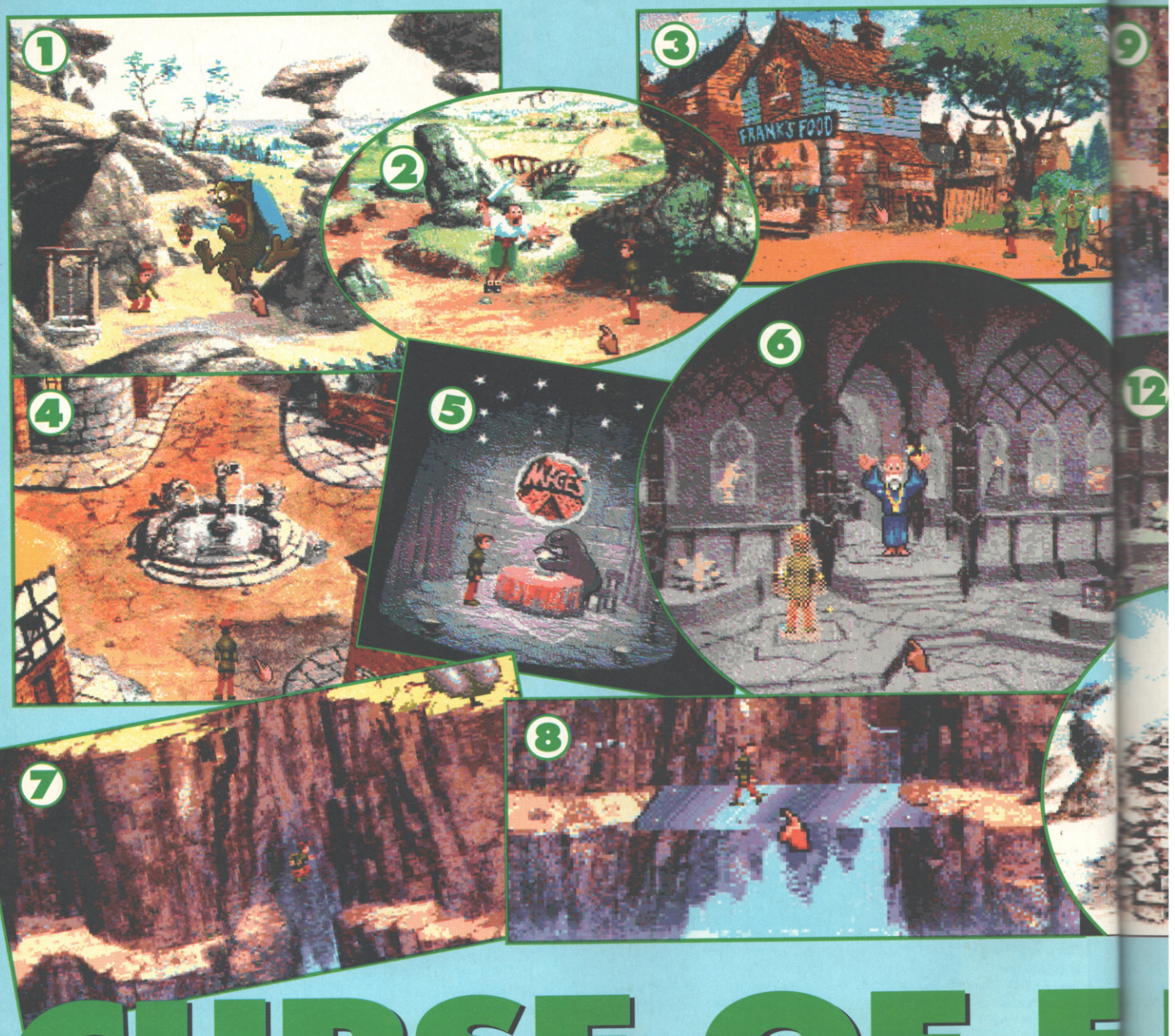
1 DARWIN
2 ANDIE PANDY
3 GET A LIFE
4 CARLOS
5 HOWIE
6 MOOBLE
7 CSL
8 THE HUMBLE ONE
9 PIXIE
10 MILESTONE
11 WAR WAR WAR
12 J MCKINNON
13 UNLUCKY
14 BLUE MONKEY
15 RED DWARF
16 BAD TASTE
17 THE KITCHEN
18 CJ
19 SORT IT OUT
20 SMART
21 VILLA3BORO2
22 EARLY MORNING
23 BORO4LEEDS1
24 EASY LIFE
25 JIMS TIES
26 PARKVIEW
27 NICENEASY
28 GREEN CARD
29 COOKIE
30 MALCY MALC
31 RAVING BURK
32 YOU GOT IT
33 SGNIMMEL
34 MINISTRY
35 MAD FREDDY
36 BIZARRE
37 FREE SCOTLAND
38 APPLE JUICE
39 PAYDAY
40 BANANA MOON
41 BONUS
42 BOUNCING
43 NO MONEY
44 A S F
45 VISION
46 SISTERS
47 8 FAST FASHION
48 CARGO
49 RAB C NESBITT
50 RANGERS
51 RAINBOW
52 DOODY
53 MIGHTY BAZ
54 TIRED
55 CONSOLIDATED
56 STAY HAPPY
57 AMERICA
58 ANOTHER DAY
59 ISOLATION
60 PROMISED LAND
61 DAEMONSLATE
62 BIG RAB
63 MIAMI VICE
64 MARGARET M
65 A34732473
66 HELP ME
67 THE EXILES
68 EIGHTLANDS
69 WINE AND DINE
70 NIN
71 TECHNOPHOBE
72 GETTING THERE
73 TIME IS
74 RUNNING OUT
75 LORDS OF CHAOS
76 NOW ITS DONE
77 IM OUT OF HERE
78 HERES TO A
79 BETTER LIFE
80 BYE BYE BYE

BATTLE ISLE SCENARIO DISK ONE
(UBI SOFT) Those Scenario Disk One codes in full, thanks to Alastair Leece of South Wirral.

One-Player Game
1 BLOCK
2 WATCH
3 LAGUN
4 BIRMA
5 SERPT
6 RAMBO
7 YUKON
8 POINT
9 FROGS
10 ITALY
11 LINES
12 VARUS
13 SOUND
14 TWEAK
15 NIPON
16 FLAIR
17 ARROW
18 KORSO
19 NOUTH
20 FJORD
21 DONOR
22 LEYES
23 JUMPY
24 WERFT

Two-Player Games
1 CLOCK
2 LOSAG
3 BOMBS
4 COMET
5 PEARL
6 MIROR
7 ROMEL
8 MAGMA

Alastair also suggests that, to make things easier, you go to the Player option before the game starts and then press fire on the Human option. Then move down and press fire on the Computer option. Then, when the game starts, you'll have all the computer's units and he'll have yours. Because the game usually gives the computer more units, you'll gain this advantage, and so you should be able to beat him easily.



CURSE OF E

Ace adventure guide Tim Tucker returns to the unpredictable and improbable

THE TOWN:

1 Last month we left Brad ascending in a bucket after donning his mask of seaweed, mud and twigs, and you undoubtedly are wondering why. Well, at the top of the well is a monster, who falls in love with the masked Brad, and grabs him to kiss him. The mask falls off, the monster is alarmed by Brad's real appearance and jumps down the well.

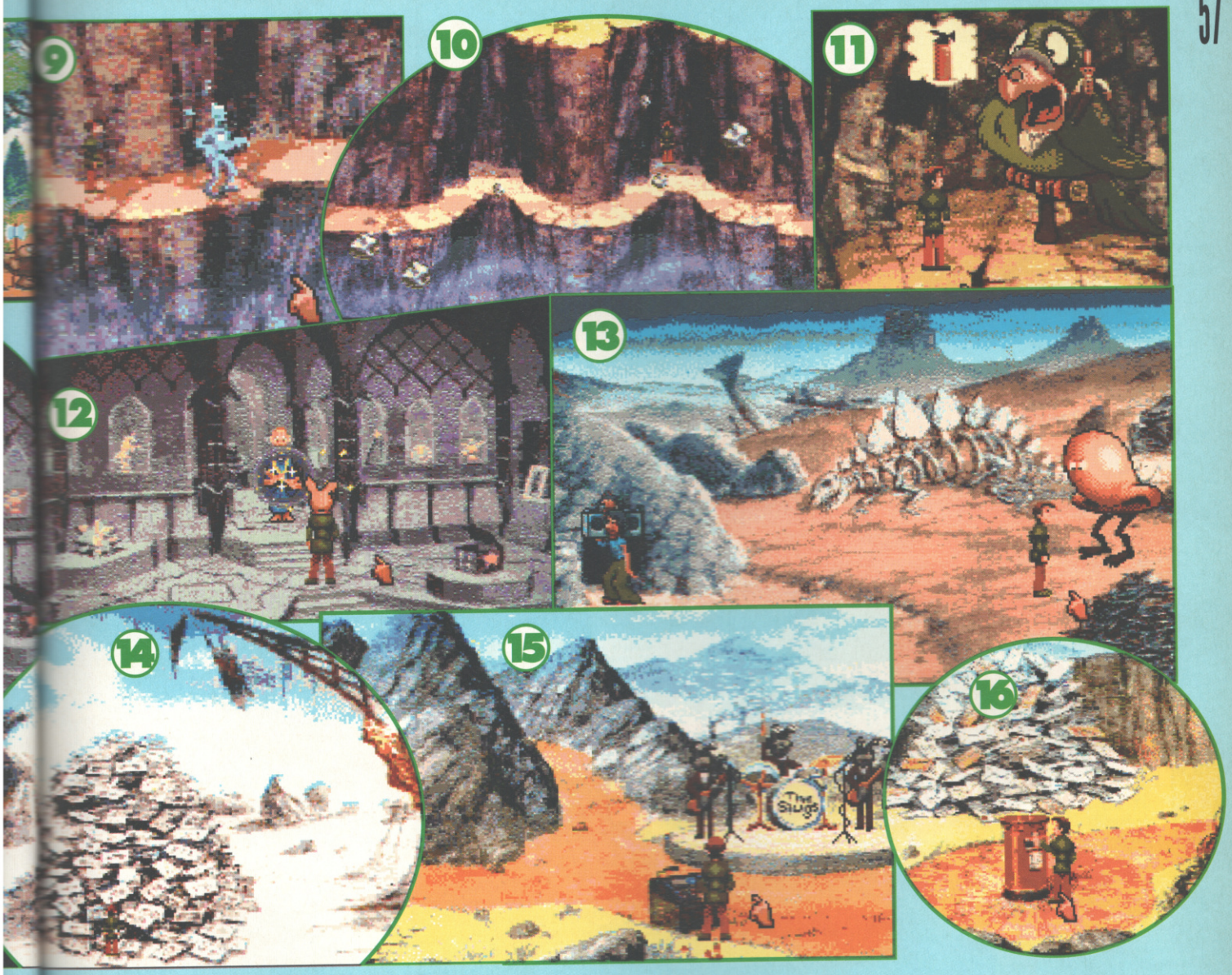
After this incident, move behind the rock in the middle of the screen, so Brad's no longer visible, and pick up the gem. Then move off down the road that goes off into the distance.

2 The scene changes to a country road. A large brigand appears and charges at you with a sword. A large inept brigand actually, because he trips up on a tree root and drops the sword. Pick up the sword and attack him with it and he will disappear leaving a bag of money. Take the money and carry on down the road.

3 You are in Dragon's Pass, and you enter the town. Two guards block off your retreat – don't worry about them. You can enter Frank's food shop and buy yourself some nice food if you really want to, but you don't actually need it. Next to this is the Red Dragon Inn, which you can enter but you'll only be sent out again.

4 Carry on down the road and you come to the town centre. Take the left exit and you're in Gypsy Road. There's a derelict shop that you can go in, but there's nothing in there. Carry on and you come to Sally See'all's shop.

5 Sally is a seal, and in exchange for money she will give you some useful advice. The advice says "Mage", which means you've got to go and find the Mage. Go back to the town centre



ENCHANTIA

land of Enchantia to help you find your way around this strangely populated tale.

and take the road going straight up. This is Sorcery Street, and you will see the Mage's shop on the left. Go in.

6 You are in the Mage's Shop of Wonders. Give the Mage some money and he will magically transport you to the edge of the world to seek the wise one.

EDGE OF THE WORLD: Move right along the ledge. Avoid the rock fall, and just after this pick up the rubber gloves on the floor.

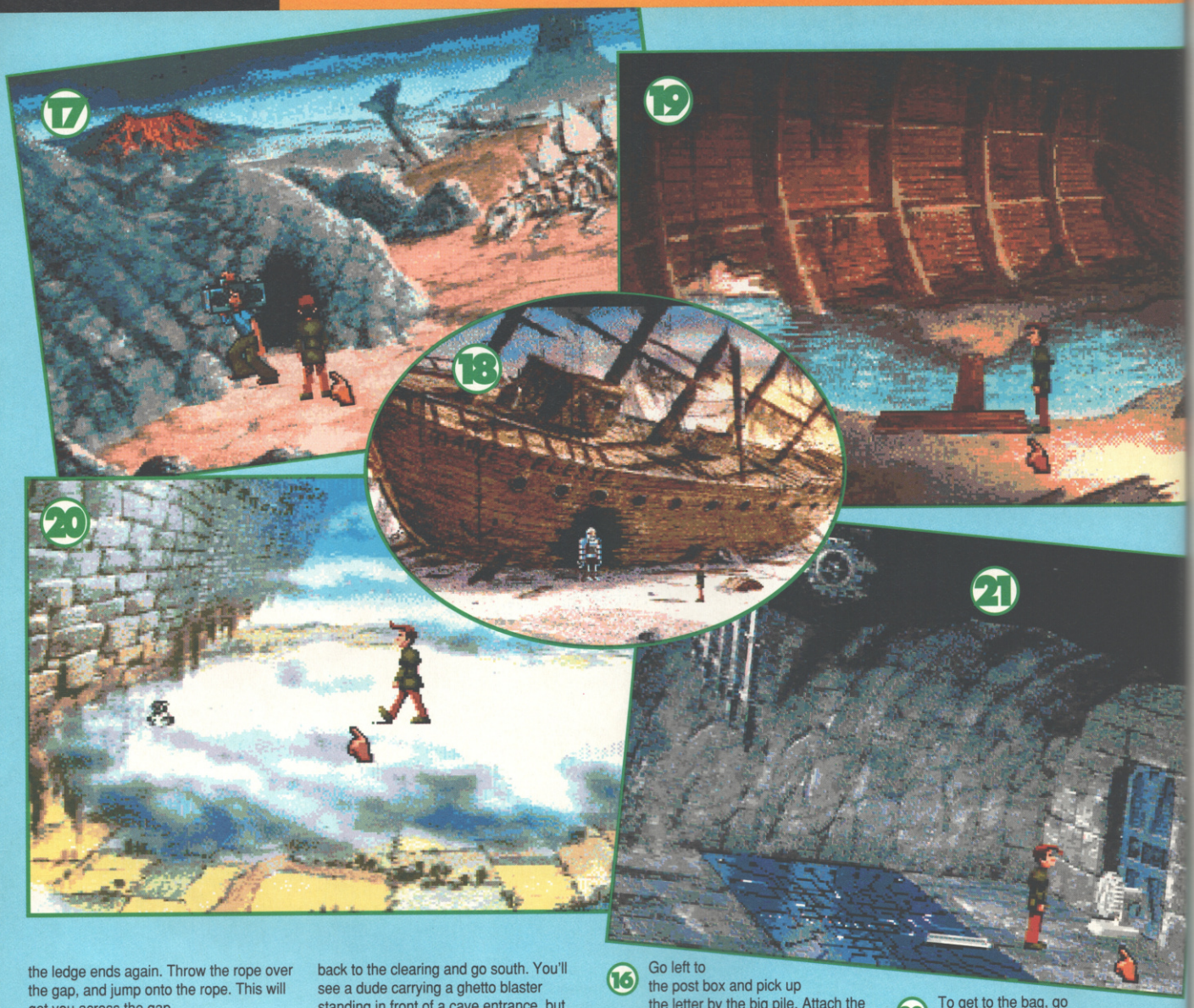
7 When you come to the large rock blocking your path, push it from the ledge, then jump on the rock to get you over the gap. Keep going right, avoid the falling boulder and you'll get to a row of buttons on the wall.

8 Press them in this order – 1, 3, 4, 3, 2 and a bridge will magically appear over the gap. Cross the bridge and once you're on the other side pick up the rope on the floor.

9 When you come to the monster giving off electrical charges, put on the rubber gloves and push him off. Carry on and wait until the rock fall stops.

10 Dash for the first alcove – you only have time to get there. Then wait until the rock fall stops and dash for the next alcove. While you wait for the rock fall to stop again, pick up the sweet at your feet. When the rock fall stops, dash out of the alcove and you'll be safe from the rock fall.

As you move to the right, a pebble falls regularly from above. Put the sweet on your head and stand under the pebble as it drops, which causes the pebble to stick to the sweet. Throw the pebble up to the bolder hanging above the gap and the bolder will fall, giving you a bridge across the gap. Walk right some more and →



the ledge ends again. Throw the rope over the gap, and jump onto the rope. This will get you across the gap.

Keep walking right, and stop to read the sign on the wall. Carry on until you come to the ledge, then say Open Sesame. The wall opens to reveal the Wise Man's cave.

11 The Wise Man is a giant Parrot with a man on his shoulder and he gives you two quests, one to find a fan and the other to find a fire extinguisher. You are then turned into a frog (briefly) and sent back to the town. You find yourself back in a derelict shop near Madame See'all's.

12 Go back to the Mage's shop and pay him again and he'll give you a pig mask disguise. You can now go back down to the road with Madame See'all's shop on it and the guard will let you through because you are so cunningly disguised.

VALLEY OF THE LOST:

You enter the Valley of the Lost on your quest to find the fan. When you get there you will be witnessing the Slugs bashing through their latest number. Go left and pick up the hair behind the bush. Come back to the clearing and go south. You'll see a dude carrying a ghetto blaster standing in front of a cave entrance, but ignore him for now.

13 Go right and you come across a giant nose monster. Insert the hair into the nose monster and he will become blocked up and explode off into the distance. Keep going right, then stop at the first pile and pick up the pen and the stamp. Go to the next pile and pick up the sock. Now go down the stairs in the ground.

There's a pile of remote controls here. If you'd come to this room earlier from another entrance you would have been prevented from picking one up by the chattering teeth on the top. They're gone now though, so go to the pile and take one of the remotes. Exit north and you will come to the wreck of the Marie Celeste.

14 Go to the pile of cassette tapes to the left of the ship hulk and pick up a tape.

15 Now go back to the clearing and put the cassette into the mixing desk. Push the remote control and you will end up with a taped recording of the Slugs. I know it sounds improbable, just trust me – it's very important.

16 Go left to the post box and pick up the letter by the big pile. Attach the stamp to the letter and post it in the box. Go left, avoiding the flaming fireballs, and pick up the tray.

17 Come back to the clearing, go south and give the tape to the dude with the ghetto blaster. In return he will give back the letter that you posted, which contains a pass key. There, I told you it was going to be useful. Enter the cave entrance, shout "help" and the back wall will collapse. Pick up the bottle of detergent.

18 Go to the Marie Celeste and from the big pile of coins to the right, attach coins to the sock. Go to the robot guarding the hull and sock him one (ho ho)... sorry, attack him with the coin-filled sock.

19 Enter the hull, and place the planks at right angles to each other over the stream (take a look at the picture, it'll all make sense). Cross over and pick up the cloth on the other side. Now go back to the clearing and insert the pass key into the security lock in the door. You'll fall down onto a cloud with a bag of marbles on it.

20 To get to the bag, go left and right quickly to build up momentum against the wind. Pick up the bag, drop off the cloud and you'll be back at the clearing. Go south again to where you found the dude, and a door will open for you to go through.

21 You're in a funny room with steel bars blocking your way. Throw the detergent on the wall, push the cloth over the mess and push the button that's revealed by your cleaning operations. Throw the bag of marbles, throw the tray and you'll glide effortlessly across the electrified floor. Pick up the fan – your first quest has finished.

Use your paper clip to unlock the door, walk through and you're back on the country road leading to the town.

And that's about it, adventure fans. Will Brad complete his quest? Will he win the baseball game? Will Darlene conquer her illness and find true love with the football coach? *(What are you on about? – Ed)* For the answers to these and many other taxing questions, tune in for next month's thrilling concluding episode. ●

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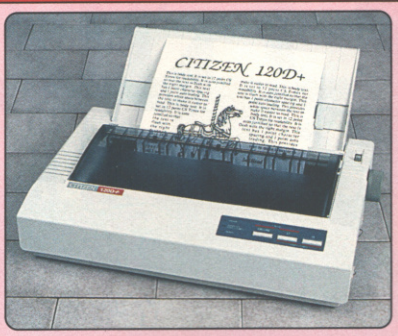

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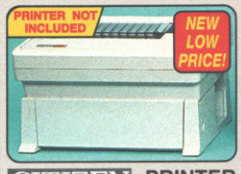

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INDIAN & THE FATE

Where there's a whip there's a way, particularly when Rich Pelley is around. This month he takes you deep into the heart of Indy's latest adventure.

1 Take the newspaper from the news stand and work your way to the fire escape pushing the crates out of the way. Climb up and you'll be in the wings of the theatre – one step closer to Sophia. Keep talking to the stagehand until the show is over and when prompted, give him the newspaper and he'll leave.

2 Push the left then right lever (the lights change yellow then green), and push the red button to activate the zombie. Then after entering the room with Sophia, talk to her and she'll invite you over to Iceland!

In Iceland, walk to the Old Dig Site and talk to Dr Heimdall, mentioning Plato's lost dialogue when possible. In return he'll give you the names of two people who will be able to help – Charles Sternhart and Philip Costa.

Sternhart is the first you'll want to visit, and here's how to find him: Take a plane to Tikal, walk into the jungle and, using your whip, entice the jungle rodent into the fourth black gap to the right, then whip him once more and follow him through the gap in the trees. Walk to the tree and you'll meet Sophia who seems to have found a rather more convenient route. She'll agree if you offer to show her around, so head for the temple and you'll be stopped in your tracks by Sternhart.

3 Try to persuade him to let you in – he'll claim that he only shows the temple to reputable scholars and will ask you to prove your worth by naming the author of the lost dialogue. You don't know this yet, and should tell him so, but mysteriously the parrot in the tree probably does. When Sternhart has left, talk to the parrot to find out the correct answer. Then entice Sternhart back outside and answer his question correctly.

Once inside the temple, ask Sophia to distract Sternhart so you can collect the kerosene lamp from the trinket stand outside. Open the lamp and use it with the darkest spiral design – it'll come off in your hands. Pick it up and use it with the the elephant head to the left. Pull his trunk and the tomb will open, revealing the Worldstone and what appears to be a shiny bead. Pick these up and leave.

4 Take the path out of the jungle, use the jeep, and fly back to Iceland. At the old dig site, take a look at the object Heimdall was digging out, then use the orichalcum bead in the exposed eel head, pick it up and click on your truck.

5 Back at the map screen, select Azores as your next destination – you will fly there and draw up at a house in a car. Knock on the door and a rather grumpy Costa will answer. As you'll discover, talking to him yourself doesn't do much good, so get to Sophia to talk to him instead at which point you'll switch control to her instead. (Politely) tell Costa who you are him who you are and enquire after Plato's lost dialogue. If you ask he will now agree to do business with Indy, so switch control back to him. Knock on the door again and offer to trade the eel. In return he'll tell you about a specific collection of artifacts at Barnett College, North America – take note because its name, and consequently its position, changes from game to game.

6 One animated sequence later you arrive at Barnett college. Walk up the stairs and take a look at the school desk. Pick up the gum underneath and use the dangling rope. Pick up the arrowhead from the shelf and push the big crate

A JONES
OF ATLANTIS

to reveal a dusty old chest. If this is the collection that you want, return down the hole, down the stairs and across to your office the other side of the road. Inside your office, open the cool box and take the jar of mayonnaise.

7 Back in the attic, use the mayo to pull the totem pole underneath the hole in the ceiling. Climb up and you'll find an urn. In the urn is a key which opens the chest below. The lost dialogue is in the chest.

The collection Costa mentioned will be in one of two places – if it wasn't inside the dusty old chest then it will be inside the wax cat figurine. Walk to the cellar, pick up a piece of coal from the heat and use the gum with your feet in order to successfully walk up the coal chute. Take the smallest cat figurine, return to the cellar and throw it in the furnace. The dialogue will now be yours.

8 After collecting the dialogue, return to your office and take a look at it. It is at this point at which the game splits in three different directions depending whether you chose to go with or without Sophia, and whether you pick the action or adventure option. We'll allow Sophia to tag along, so click on 'I'd rather tackle this with you', and confirm your choice.

9 Go to Algiers, talk to the beggar, and take note of his special offer. Head across the market place, down the back alley and talk to the shopkeeper. When he stops rambling, pick up the mask and go to Monte Carlo. Talk to Sophia and she will coax you into a seance. Dr Trottier is one of the strangers that walks past, but to discover which one keep talking to any of them to narrow down what he looks like. Locate him, and invite him up.

10 The answer to his question is in the dialogue – so take note! Persuade him to follow you into the hotel and tell Sophia to keep him busy. At this point, collect the flash light from the cupboard beneath the mirror, pick up the bed spread and walk to the fuse box and pull the fuse. Use the bedspread, mask and flash lamp in order and you'll scare your guest away. He'll leave something rather important behind. Leave the room, hop in the taxi and head back to Algiers.

11 Back at Algiers, return to the shopkeeper, show him the stone and keep him talking until he gives you a map and some camels. He'll ask if he can trade your mask with something of his. Agree, take the first item he offers, then attempt to buy a Squab on a Stick from the grocer next door (who refuses). Keep trading with Omar the Shopkeeper to obtain the sort of item the Grocer tells you he wants until he finally accepts a scarf for his Mother-in-Law.

The knife thrower, you'll note, is looking for a new assistant to his knife throwing act (after 'The accident'), and who better than Sophia? She'll disagree, but if you give her an encouraging push then the knife thrower will think that she is volunteering anyway. Following the act he'll reward Sophia with a souvenir knife which in turn she gives to you – this will come in useful in just a minute. Walk to the beggar, hand over the Squab on the Stick to the beggar and take a look at your free gift – a free balloon ride for two. To the right there is a sign on the wall spookily advertising balloon rides as well. Walk up the steps, off to the right and hand over the ticket. He'll winch you up once you've climbed into the basket to a nice, safe, tethered height. Use the knife with rope and you can fly away onto a new map screen where you should land your balloon in the nearest Nomad camp. And that's where you'll have to stay until next month. Can you wait?

KYRA

Tree surgery for beginners, purple roses (not from Cairo) a

1 *Kyrandia* starts off with Brandon, our hero, in a terrible state. His grandad, Kallak, has been turned to stone, and he isn't at all sure what to do next. Searching around his house you'll find a garnet and a note on the table, an apple in the purple pot and an old saw under the table. After you've wandered around the house for a while the tree spirit emerges rather alarmingly from a wall and gives you the your first clue: to go to the Temple and talk to Brynn. From this point onwards you should pick up any gemstones that you see on your travels – they become essential further on in your quest.

2 Head left to the temple and you'll meet a blond babe *('Babe'?! – Ed)* in a fetching off-the-shoulder number. This is Brynn, who'll magically treat the note so you can read it. It's from Kallak, who sets you off on the quest for the amulet, and as you'll have no further need of it, you can leave the note here. Brynn asks Brandon to bring her a purple rose, which can be found at the Forest Altar. On your way, pick up a tear from the Pool of Sorrow and place it in the mark in the sick willow's trunk.

3 This causes the tree to spring back into life, which attracts the attention of Merith, who'll prattle on in a childish way, and then run off. You've got to follow him through the forest, and when he falls out of the tree, take his marble which, by bizarre coincidence, fits perfectly into the space in the altar.

4 Take the purple rose but instead of heading straight back to Brynn, go to the broken bridge and give the saw to Herman. Leaving him sawing a tree down, head back to the temple where Brynn will turn the purple rose into a silver one. Putting this silver rose on the altar will make the amulet appear, and by this time Herman will have mended the bridge. Crossing over the river takes you into the Timbermist woods, and onto the second map in the Kyrandia hint book.

5 Just into the woods you come across a house, where the wizard Darm lives with a terminally lazy dragon called

NDIA

ps and advice galore. Mark Winstanley's got the lot.

Brandywine. Darm asks for a quill so he can write – the woes of the country have cured him of his writer's block.

6 The songbird seems an ideal candidate for a feather, but needless to say it isn't as straightforward as just ripping a few out of this crippled creature. We're into the caring '90s, where nature and ecology mean something, so to help the bird you must pick up a walnut from under the songbird's tree, an acorn from the Grove of Oaks, and a pine cone from the forest.

7 Planting all these three into the 'gopher' hole in the Deadwood Glade causes a rather chatty plant to spring to life. In appreciation of Brandon returning life to the Deadwood Glade, this verbose hybrid activates the yellow gem on the Amulet, which allows you to heal the songbird's broken wing. In return for this you get Darm's quill and he writes you a magic scroll to help your quest.

He also tells you about your four birthstones that he's summoned, some of which you may already have, and how you must place them on a plate.

8 You'll find the sunstone in the stream near the spring, and others scattered around the woods. You also need a ruby from the Ruby Tree, but on your first attempt you'll get bitten and will die unless you use the yellow section of the amulet to heal yourself.

9 The dish that Darm told you about is the one at the marble altar, and when you place the sunstone, garnet, sapphire and ruby onto the plate, it changes into a golden flute.

Brandon's now set for his journey to Shadowrealm, which is entered through the Serpent's Grotto. When Brandon tries to enter this he finds his way blocked by the dreaded Malcolm, who tries and fails to impress by juggling daggers. After a lengthy monologue he throws one, which sticks in a tree. Throw this back at him and he retreats into the cave, blocking the entrance with a wall of ice. The only way to smash this wall is to play the flute, and with this barrier there's nothing left in his way.

So it's onwards into the scary Shadowrealms in next month's solution.

IGNORAMUS?

Then you need...

THE LAST RESORT

with Jonathan Davies

Stuck in your favourite game? Don't know where to turn? You think *you've* got problems. Here's Jonathan Davies...

Hi everyone. Welcome to the Last Resort. This month, as every month, I'll be sifting through my post bag, looking at your questions, answering some of the easy ones and printing the rest in the hope that someone else will be able to help out. I'll also be seeing if anyone's managed to sort out some of the loose ends from previous issues. Exciting, eh?

LOOSE ENDS

Here are the questions I floundered on. If you can do any better, please write in and let everyone know how it's done.

Q "Please tell me where to find the jar that says 'It's taboo to disturb the dead' in CADAVER on level one."
Chris Wall, Dudley

Q "In the Cellar of the Guild in LEGEND there's a door that's locked with a crystal key. The only thing is, I can't find the key."
Sandro Eggeite, Holland

Q "I'm stuck in a certain room on level one of LEGEND's Dark Tower. The room has a tree in the middle of it, spikes which block my path, a heal floor tile behind a table in the top right corner, a green floor tile and a door which won't budge in the west. I need to get past the spikes to reach a lever."
Saf Efstathiou, Croydon

Q "I need a cheat for SUPER OFF ROAD. I can get to Fandango but no further."
Andrew Soong, Sussex

Q "In THE SIMPSONS, how do you beat the man at the end of level two? I've collected all the hats and got over the sweet platforms, but when I reach him he throws things at me. All I can do is jump over them, as I have nothing to throw back."
Joanna Mills (aged 7), Witney

Q "I'm totally stuck on mission three of Group Zulu in FIREFORCE – it's the Designate Girder Bridge one, and it's the last mission for me. Please help!"
Simon Gearg, Glasgow

Q "In HEAD OVER HEELS, I can get all four crowns but I can't find the throne room in Blacktooth Castle in order to complete the game."
Adrian Watts, Derby

Q "How do you open the safe in the bank in PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE? What number do you use, and how or where do you get yourself a pilot's licence?"
L A Phips, Liskeard

Q "I'm stuck on FUTURE WARS, fairly early in the game. After climbing up the tree, falling asleep, and taking the bloke's clothes, I can't get the monk's habit from the tree or get past the wolf. I've shown the pendant to the guard, and spent ages waiting for his master to return, but with no luck."
Chris Stevenson, Burnley

Q "In CADAVER, level three, Eastmarch Hall, I can't find the key to open the door at the top of the moving stairs. Can anyone help?"
Linda Jones, Doncaster

Q "In STEG THE SLUG, on level nine, where are your babies?"
James Leigh, Manchester

Q "On level 1-4 of LEANDER, after you've collected the silver bow, where do you go in the orange cave?"
James Leigh, Manchester

Q "Does anyone know if there's a cheat for FUZZBALL?"
Alexis Tzitzas, Dukinfield

Q "On the first level of CADAVER, I've got 92% but I can't defeat the Dragon. I'm doing something wrong."
Bob Whyte, Chippenham

Q "On TURRICAN 2, I can't seem to get past area 4-3. I can get to the boss, which is a flying robot, but I can't find a safe place to destroy it."
Mark BeHarrell, Burnham-on-Crouch

Q "How do you turn on the taps on level two of CAPTAIN PLANET?"
Robert Booth, Huddersfield

Q "I've got as far as getting the king's permit in LEGEND, and I'm left with one silver key. But I can't get out of the room with the water by the door, or back out of the dungeon, to take the permit to the king."
LA Phips, Liskeard

If you've got a question, or an answer, write to me at The Last Resort, Amiga Power, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Oh yes, and some people are still forgetting to mark their envelopes 'Question' or 'Answer'. Now, I've warned you about this before, and I don't think I need to explain again the calamitous consequences of not doing so. So remember – 'Question' or 'Answer', and we'll all be able to sleep peacefully.

OPERATION STEALTH

Q "I've read the message from the razor. Red carnations are needed, but how do I get them? I have no money."
Niels De Ryck, Hooltert, Belgium

A You do, actually. It's hidden in your passport, which is in the briefcase. You'll need to change it into Santa Paraguan currency before you can buy the carnation.

Q "I'm in the office after the overhead sequences. I've got a little box, a watch, an electric razor and a pen. I've tried everything."

A Ah, but have you tried operating the statue's arm? And using the little box on the safe that appears? Thought not.

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE

Q "When do you type 'ITS EASY WHEN YOU KNOW HOW'?"
Mark Beharrell, Burnham-on-Crouch

A Do it on the title screen, and don't type the spaces. It's, er, easy when you know how.

NEW ZEALAND STORY

Q "I can't get past the thing at the end of level 2-4."
Sean McGrail, Enniskellen

A There is actually a warp on this level. To use it, stand on the ledge just before the octopus, face right and press fire.

MAGICLAND DIZZY

Q "I want to know how you can get rid of Zak and free Dylan, Dora and Dozy."
Sean McGrail, Enniskillen

A In other words, you want to solution to the whole game. No way! I'll just tell you that you can't get rid of Zaks without some help from the Devil, and that's not till after you've freed everyone.

Q "I can rescue my friends and get 27 diamonds. What now?"
Paul Brassey, Southport

A Basically, you've got to find three more diamonds. And as I don't know which ones you've already found, I can't be of much help. They're probably hidden behind things. Or something.

Q "I'm stuck on my geography homework. What, exactly, is the capital of France?"
Jean-Pierre Fillet-Mignon, Paris

A This isn't a real question, is it? I really hate it when the Last Resort runs short and the rest of the team start making things up. It's not big, it's not funny and it's not in any way clever. I wish they'd stop.

CASES CLOSED

As good fortune would have it, some of AMIGA POWER's more astute and knowledgable readers have been able to come up with a few answers.

THE SIMPSONS

Q Jamie (aged 7) was stuck at 'the red stones bit'.

A "Stand on the first red stone. Another stone will alter after a while and turn red. Jump onto it. After a while another stone will turn red – jump onto it quickly, before the stone you're standing on turns back to grey. Red stones will keep appearing and disappearing until you can see a solid white platform. You have to do a large jump (Fire + Jump) to get to it."
Ian Lewis, Barnet

PREMIERE

Q Steven Roberts of Nottingham was stuck at the train.

A "Keep firing at the train, jumping over the gaps, ducking the signals and collecting as much ammunition as you can from the posts."
Jack Young (aged 8), London

LEGEND

Q So to *Legend*, which is something I've been putting off. Gus Svensson was on Fagranc level three.

A "I think you may have misprinted his question." More than likely. "The sign should read 'Come and see me at the Tower. K'. And the answer is that you can't get any further in Fagranc at the moment. Go and see the Ancient, who will inform you that his evil cousin Kilijan has stolen his mystic staff and ask you to get it back for him. You'll have to go to the Dark Tower and though five levels to get the skull key you need to continue at Fagranc."
Valdi Wilkosz, Newton Aycliffe

Q M Mancox of Brighton was baffled by a riddle, and stuck in a room on level one of the Dark Tower.

A "Ignore the riddle of the unshrine for the time being. There are three riddles in all but as you progress through the game you'll find the answers. As for the bar keeps, the druids are not the true masters of Stone Henge – you're told who they are later on.

"His main problem is one I had too. To get to the other side of the room you need to stop the spikes. To do this, stand the rune maker in front of them and cast the following spell twice." I hate it when this happens. Right, he's drawn a diamond, an X, an upwards-pointing arrow, an X, a diamond, an X, an upwards-pointing arrow and another X.

"As there is a healing rune behind the table, this should cast a healing spell over the rune. If not, continue until it does. When it has, the spikes stop and you can enter the other half of the room."
(That sounds like the answer to Saf Efstathiou's question in Loose Ends. Please pay attention, Jonathan. – Ed)

Q Stuart Lucas of Bromley was also stuck on level one of the Dark Tower, in a different room.

A "Stand next to the teleport rune and cast Surround, Continuous, Teleport. Place a character on the nearest circle and he'll be teleported to the other side. As he will be almost instantly returned to his start point you need to move another character onto the first circle (this takes timing, but persevere). Your first character will now be teleported to another circle from which he can move to the south level to pull it, creating a bridge across the river. To pull the other level simply put a character on each circle to stop teleporting."
David Trigg, London

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Q Mark Williamson of York was terribly stuck at the two-doors-and-a-loose-tile bit.

A "Whatever you do, don't make the loose tile fall and hit the pressure pad below, as this closes the left-hand door. You must go to the far right. Near the 'dead end' is another loose tile above your head. Knock this out and the whole level is opened up. Eventually you'll return to the same place, but the left-hand door will be open."
Adrian Watts, Derby

ZOOL

Q Chris Papadopoulos couldn't get past area 2-2. The answer appeared in Complete Control last month, but in case Chris missed it...

A "You've got to play the following tune on one of the keyboards: Red, Yellow, Light Blue, Dark Blue. A helicopter will then appear to take you to the end of the level."
Ian Lewis, Barnet

SPELLBOUND DIZZY

Q Daniel Haydock of Bolton couldn't get past the bear.

A "Pick up the empty jar in front of him and go up the windy shaft to the killer bees. Drop the jar in front of them. They'll fill the jar with honey. Then drop it in front of the bear and he'll allow you to pass."
Suhail Valji, Bushey

Q John and Simon Halliwell, from the Isle of Man, were wondering (as, indeed were many people, I'm sure) what the brake shoe was for, and how to get through the water.

A "The brake shoe goes on the mine cart down the shaft. But before you can use it you need to fix the track with an iron hammer. This is further down the shaft (second tunnel on your left). To get there you need to be carrying two sandstones. To do this, collect one and leave it in the clouds above where you start the game. Now get another sandstone and collect the one in the cloud. Go into the second shaft on your left to get the hammer. Fix the track and use the cart. Push the joystick right and up so you'll make the jump.

"You don't need to go through the water yet – there's nothing useful there, just a stick."
Mattie Whittle, Dunmore East, Eire

VENGEANCE OF EXCALIBUR

Q In issue 20, a reader whose name must have disappeared off the bottom of the page was getting a good deal of grief from a djini.

A "All you need do is drink the wine. You'll be left with a cork – use it to cork up the djini."
Aynsley French, Plymouth

FIRST SAMURAI

Q I Campbell of Argyll was stuck on level two.

A "If you have four special items the level can be completed – you don't need the fifth. Go to the place where the spikes move up and down out of the tree trunks. Drop down left when you've reached the furthest left spike. Jump left over the gap. There's a teleport there, just waiting for you. Pass through the teleport (making sure you have a mystical bell). Use the bell over the long fire and four buckets of water appear to quench the flames. Go up the steps and kill the guardian."
Adrian Watts, Derby

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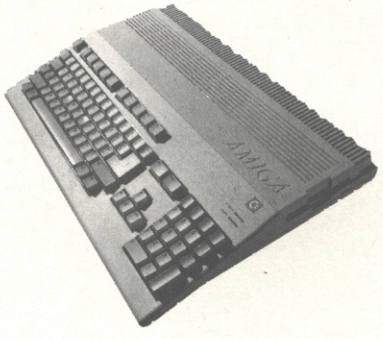

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Craig Howard keeps us up to date with events in Hidden land.

The *Speedball*-type design didn't make it – not nearly cute enough.

DESIGN A GAME

Celebrity Spit. But who *is* that celebrity?

24.11.92

Today we all sat down and discussed ideas about *Spodland*, mainly talking about the kind of work we'd have to do. After a lot of arguments (as usual), we decided that I'd do all of the initial bits and bobs and come up with a look for the game, while Simon and Will continue to work on our 32-colour, 50-frames-a-second *Sonic*-alike, *Dong* – look out for it, folks! *(Oi, stop that plugging and get on with it. – Ed)*

Creating the initial look for the game is important as it gives everyone an idea of what the finished game should look like, which gives you an identifiable goal to aim for. Martin *(The compo winner who actually designed the game. – Ed)* had already given us his original specifications, of course, but when you transfer those to the computer certain limitations arise. For example, you have to consider the amount of colours you're going to use and decide on the size of the sprites. Contrary to popular belief, the Amiga doesn't actually like working with a low resolution 32-colour screen. Usually Amiga games are in 16 or even eight colours because of processor time, which is the be-all and end-all where games programming is concerned, as the less time the game uses for its mechanics, the faster and smoother you can make it. It's perfectly possible to write a game in 4096 colours with sprites bigger than the screen, but it'd move like a tranquillised slug with a dodgy leg.

25.11.92

After considering the constraints of the game design we found it totally viable that the game could be in 32 colours and still be nice and smooth, mainly because it's based around a static screen and doesn't involve any scrolling, which really eats up processor time.

Having 32 colours is important as it can help us achieve that 'consolesque' look which everyone seems to like so much these days. Now we had to decide on the size of the characters. This is an easy bit, as computer data is usually handled in groups of 16 bits, which leads to sprites being sized in multiples of 16 pixels. We settled on a size of 32x32 pixels, which is big enough to have a lot of detail in the sprites but not so big as to dominate the screen and leave too little room to play the game.

A Spod in full-on raging gob mode... *(If you say 'yesterday', you're fired. – Ed)*

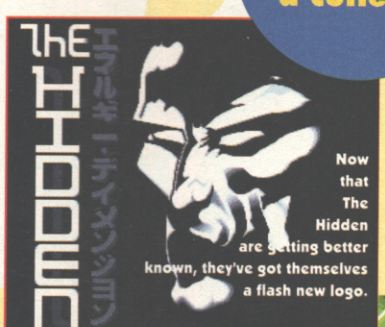
26.11.92

With all the limits set, I start to sketch out some piccies of how I perceive the game. After several hours I've conjured up several different looks. After looking at all of the designs I've decided which one I like best, but it probably won't be everyone else's cup of tea, so I decide to be democratic and put it to the vote with Simon and Will. Before I get down to that, though, a more important appointment...

27.11.92

Dark glasses today. Last night I had a college reunion with several old chums and several pints of scrumpy. I've got to brave the sunlight, though, because today's the moment of truth with the screen designs. Will Simon and Will like any of them? Will they like the one that's my favourite?

"Everyone loves a cutie..."



Now that The Hidden are getting better known, they've got themselves a flash new logo.

28.11.92

Shock! They actually like the screen designs, including my fave, but unfortunately we couldn't manage to agree on which one was the best. In the end it became a toss-up between the *Speedball*-ish one (my fave) and the really sickly cute one, so I decided to draw each one in *DPaint* and see which one came out the best.

30.11.92

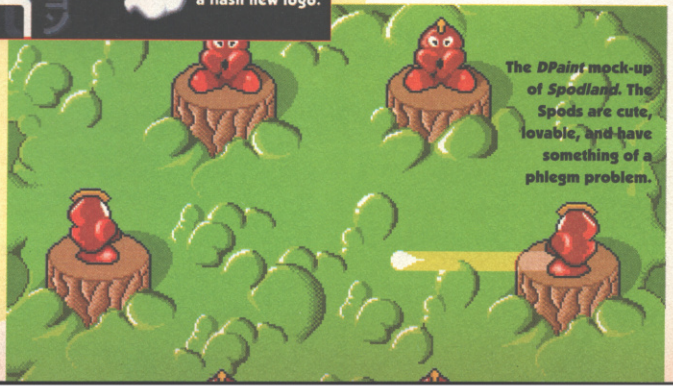
Finally finished both screens, and after much discussion the cute design came out the winner, due to the fact that it's more eye-catching, and the fact that everyone loves a cutie...

1.12.92

When we discussed the original design of *Spodland* with the AP crew, it was decided that we could bolt a few bonus games onto the original game to give a bit more variety to the gameplay. Having finished off the screen designs I wanted to draw up a *DPaint* mockup of one of these sub-games. There were several to chooses from (more on these at a later date), but my favourite was something called Celebrity Spit.

This involved the Spods doing what they do best (spitting), but instead of doing it at each other they gob at a celebrity. More points are awarded for getting closer to features (nose, ears etc) and such like... I'm most pleased with this little bit of bad taste, but I hope nobody gets too offended. In any case, that's all for this month, I'm off to chill out to the sounds of Hugo Montenegro planking his Moog. *(Oh dear. – Ed)*

Until next month, this is Craig Howard saying 'Byeee!' *(Oh dear. – Ed)* ●



The *DPaint* mock-up of *Spodland*. The Spods are cute, lovable, and have something of a phlegm problem.

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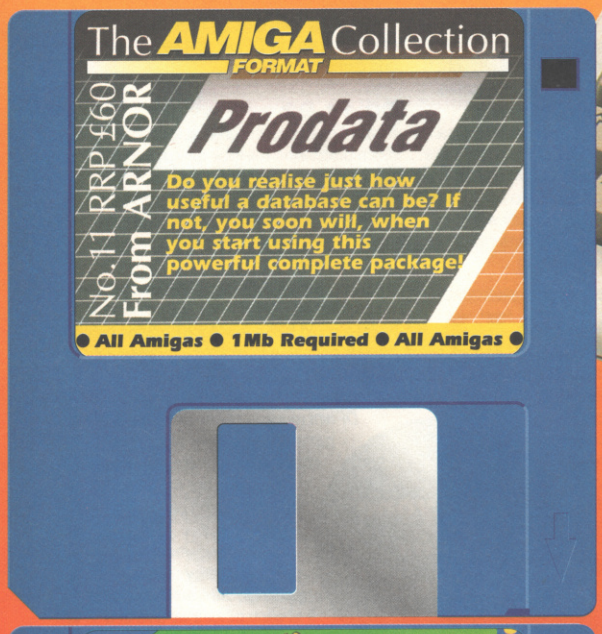

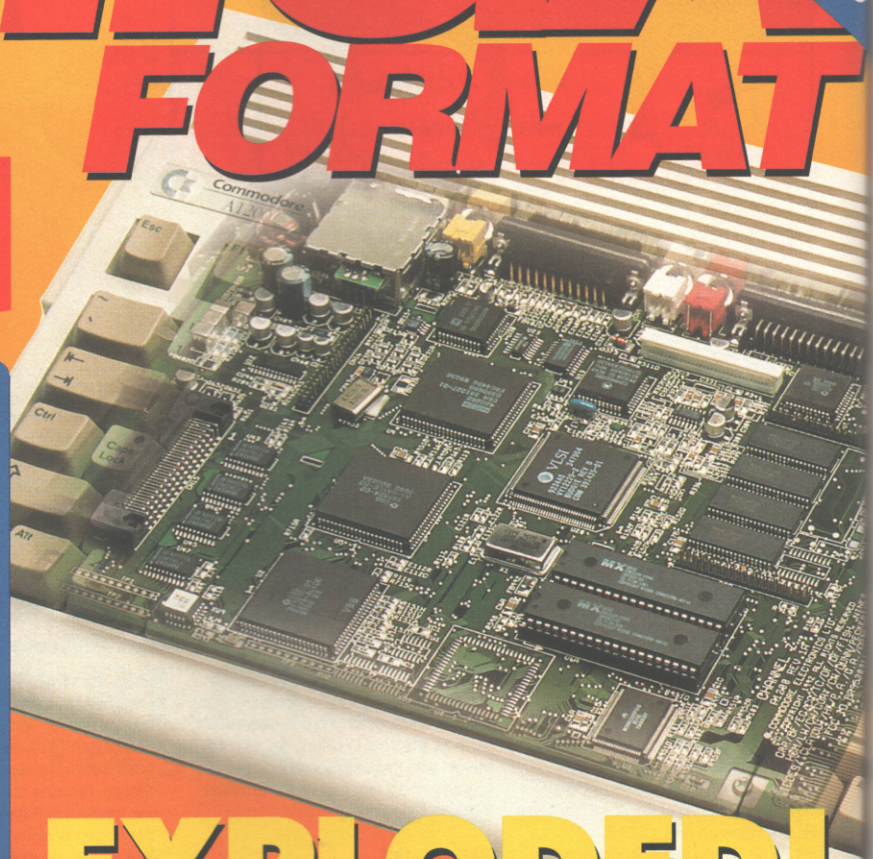

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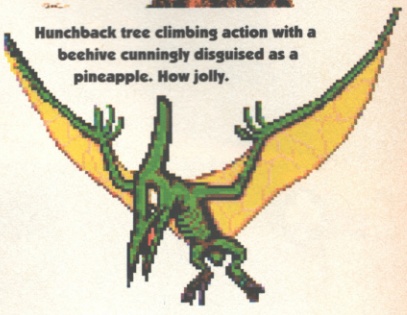
GAME REVIEWS CONTINUED

Game: Joe And Mac – Cavemen Ninja
Publisher: Elite
Authors: Robert Mann at Motivetime
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

The second level boss looks an awful lot like Audrey 2 from the Little Shop Of Horrors.


Hunchback tree climbing action with a beehive cunningly disguised as a pineapple. How jolly.

JOE & MAC CAVEMAN NINJA

Joe and Mac may well be cavemen... but Ninjas? Be serious.

Y'know, when you've been in this job for a while, you begin to get a little blasé about reading instruction manuals. After a time, you've pretty much seen all the game styles there are, got to grips with anything that's likely to be flung at you, and you can pick up almost anything and play it without having to plough through all the tedious 'plot' and fatuous 'instructions' (although you can get some real treats if you do – the manual for the Amiga version of *Road Rash* included lots of information on what the 'fire' button did, then added a helpful little labelled diagram just to make it quite clear which one the 'fire' button was, in case you were confused). I wasn't expecting anything different from a simple arcade conversion like this. You'd think I'd learn, wouldn't you?

Words, eh? Don't you just hate 'em? The programmers of *Joe And Mac* obviously do, I can't imagine why else they'd do away with them completely and give this game the kind of options screen that you'd have to be a professional semaphore operator to penetrate. I had to spend almost five minutes reading the manual just to work out how to select which of the two pointlessly-complicated joystick modes I wanted to use ('Oh, I think I'll have the one where you waggle the joystick up and down to do the big jump that you need to get almost anywhere and waggle the joystick down and up to jump down from a platform, please. It's dreamy.'), and I still haven't quite got to grips with how to toggle the music and sound effects. WE CAN READ, YOU CRETINS, STOP DOING THIS TO US!

"The game's levels are all fairly short and tedious"

Still, by wiggling the stick and hoping for the best, you can eventually get into the game itself. Big mistake. First off, you have to adjust your eyes to some of the cheap'n'nastiest-looking graphics seen on the Amiga in recent memory. It would appear the Amiga's palette simply isn't up to the task of reproducing the coin-op's subtleties of shading and colouring, but there isn't any excuse for everything being this square and crude. Really, *Kid Gloves* looked slicker than this. The music's no more annoying than the average cute arcade platformer, but in the actual game department *Joe And Mac* is so lacking you have to suspect that it was playtested by Stevie Wonder. When he was drunk.

Given the tragedy of a control system (at this point it would only be fair to mention that there is an option to use a Mega Drive joypad for control, which improves matters a bit, but I'm not a fair man so I'm not going to bother), it's perhaps predictable that the game's a bit of a nightmare in action, but that doesn't make it any less miserable an experience while you're actually doing it. The game's levels are all fairly short and tedious (baddies appear mysteriously out of nowhere, you shoot them, some more appear etc), capped with bosses that don't offer any challenge other than trying desperately to stay awake while you bung the joystick on autofire and pump in the necessary 524 hits they take before they die.

Honestly, what a lump of crap.

● *STUART CAMPBELL*

Run across that wobbly bridge as fast as you can before the nasty pterodactyl, er...

UPPERS The waterfalls on level two are quite pretty.

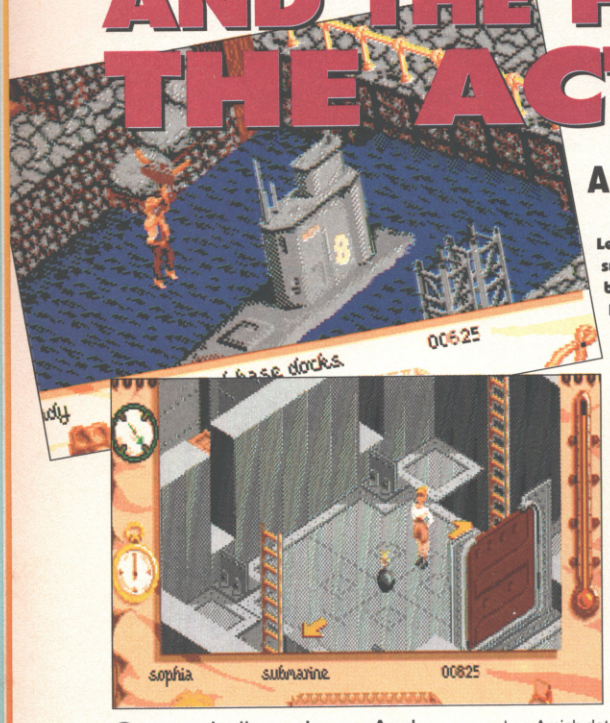
DOWNERS It looks absolutely awful, it plays like a dead horse, and it smells rather worse.

THE BOTTOM LINE
A bad conversion of an uninspiring game, extra-specially handicapped by ludicrous controls and a horrific front end.

22 PERCENT

INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS THE ACTION GAME

As before, there are two versions of the Indy game.



Left: Leaping onto the submarine is, it has to be said, entertaining. Below left: Sophia and a bomb. Leaving seems a good idea.

Game: Indiana Jones And The Fate Of Atlantis – The Action Game
Publisher: US Gold
Authors: Jon Steele, Martin Walker
Price: £25.99
Release: Out Now

Right then, pay attention, it's one of those word association games. You know the type, I say 'hot', you say 'cold', I say 'cute', you say 'Winona'. Ready? Here we go then: Indiana Jones.

And what was your response? I'd take a guess that words like 'action','whips' or 'enormously expensive end-scenes involving German soldiers shouting 'It's Beautiful' while weird ethereal she-ghosts fire blasts of energy through them' featured strongly in the answers, and that 'casino' or 'gambling' came low in the list along with 'mulberries' and 'fly fishing.'

So what's Indy doing in a posh casino? Isn't this more of a 'The name's Bond, James Bond' type scenario? And will I use any more question marks here?

There's something off-putting about looking at a game box and seeing a picture of someone looking quite, but not entirely, unlike Indiana Jones. Okay, so box art has nothing to do with the contents, but the interesting thing to note here is that the game almost, but not entirely, fails to capture the spirit, look or feel of the Indy film trilogy.

There's a background to this adventure which is presented in a confusing sequence at the beginning of the game, but since I was expecting an adventure centring around an Amish detective tracking down a Transformer doll to a chemical factory, this sequence did little to inform, educate or even entertain. Anyone familiar with the excellent *Fate of Atlantis* adventure game will know that Indy and his sidekick Sophia are racing to prevent the Nazis getting some ancient beads so they can't develop the world's first Atlantean artifact bomb. Or something like that anyway.

Which leaves Indy at the casino in Monte Carlo, which has obviously let its dress codes slide a long way to let such a shabby adventurer through its doors. In fact, etiquette seems to have collapsed entirely, as the only other residents are jackbooted Nazis and women who're all wearing the same evening dress, which must be the ultimate act of social suicide. Not only that, but should Indy approach one of these dames and smack them squarely in the mush, one of the croupiers will say 'Please don't hit the hotel guests,' politely, mind you. Indy punches or whips the Nazis into submission, whereas Sophia makes use of her deadly high heels to such fearsome groin-pulverising effect that the Nazis drop their possessions and beg her top stop. For some reason they drop all their money, and chocolate. Maybe they're Belgian Nazis.

You can toggle control between Indy and Sophia during your travels, which take you to a naval base, a Nazi submarine to some islands, and then finally the lost city of Atlantis. Plenty of locations, so plenty of scope for car chases, thrilling roof top battles and cliff-edge struggles. Right? Wrong. What we have is six levels of pretty much the same thing. There's the excitement of breaking the code of the rigged roulette tables, or the death-defying leap onto the sub in the naval base, but mostly you walk around, pick things up and hit people, and the roulette's crap anyway. And there aren't any snakes in it.

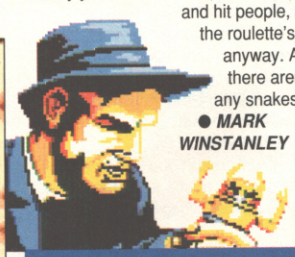
● *MARK WINSTANLEY*

I see a tall handsome stranger. Or a scruffy bloke in a battered hat.

"Six levels of pretty much the same thing"

Above: The whole game has something of a brown look. This is the casino.

Left: At least the characters add a welcome splash of colour. Even if it's only another few shades of brown.



UPPERS You can view this tiresome game from several camera angles.

DOWNERS But why would you want to bother doing that?

THE BOTTOM LINE

It takes real talent to take an action-filled concept such as an Indiana Jones scenario, and turn it into a dull, lifeless game. It's boring, it's repetitive, and it's nothing more than a feeble attempt to cash in on the growing reputation of the excellent adventure game of the same name.

36 PERCENT

DRAGONS LAIR III

Part three of the bizarre interactive cartoon thing is here.

Game: Dragon's Lair III: The Curse of Mordread
Publisher: Ready Soft
Authors: Too many to mention here
Price: £34.99
Release: Out now

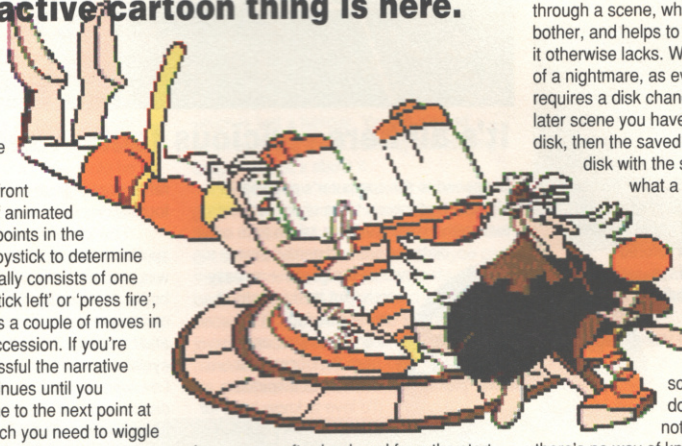
We've been through this so many times, but let's say it again. Do graphics make a game? The answer, as the *Dragon's Lair* and *Space Ace* series have consistently proved, is no. These games contain possibly the best graphics you'll find anywhere, but the problem is that there's no gameplay to accompany them. Is this instalment any different?

For those of you who haven't come across these games before, this is how it goes: Our hero is Dirk the Daring, and for some long forgotten reason he keeps getting his girlfriend Daphne nicked. It's your job to rescue the damsel in distress.

Now to the gameplay. Er, what gameplay? No, there is some. You see, the story unfolds in front of you as a series of animated scenes, and at key points in the action you use the joystick to determine Dirk's fate. This usually consists of one move, such as 'joystick left' or 'press fire', or sometimes a couple of moves in quick succession. If you're successful the narrative continues until you come to the next point at which you need to wiggle the joystick.

"There are plenty of cartoons on TV"

Okay, that's the past, so what does this game do to improve on the previous efforts? Well, I'm sorry to say, precious little. Once again Dirk manages to lose his girl (I'd look for somebody else if I were Daphne), this time to his old enemy Mordroc's sister Mordread. The poor girl is whisked away from their idyllic cottage in happy-ever-after-land, and from the start Dirk gives chase in his inimitable fashion.



In this game Dirk's whisked into an Alice in Wonderland world where he encounters Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee, the Queen of Hearts, the Mad Hatter's tea party and all the other Lewis Carrol classics that people so often rely on when they've run out of ideas of their own. It all looks wonderful as usual, but I'm afraid the gameplay is in no way improved. It's the same "watch for thirty seconds then make a move" stuff. And the scenes are broken up in the weirdest places. You'll be in the middle of a scene when suddenly the game will access the disk to load in the next scene.

There are some improvements. It's hard drive installable, which with seven disks is important. If you're running the game from hard drive then the game is saved automatically whenever you get through a scene, which saves a lot of bother, and helps to give the game a flow it otherwise lacks. With one drive it's a bit of a nightmare, as every few scenes requires a disk change, and if you die in a later scene you have to reload the original disk, then the saved game disk, then the disk with the scene on – phew, what a pain.

The manual doesn't give you a complete solution, but it does give you a few tips on what is required of you in each scene. The problem is that in some scenes you might be doing the right thing but not at the right time, and there's no way of knowing.

Having said that the game is remarkably easy to get through, and at the very most you'll get a week's worth of playing out of it. At 35 quid that's too much to spend on such a limited game. And after all, there are plenty of cartoons on TV that cost nothing to watch. Not worth it, is it really?

● *TIM TUCKER*

UPPERS As always, fabulous graphics and intriguing narrative with some imaginative humorous touches too. A good showcase for what your Amiga can handle in that department.

DOWNERS Well it's not a game is it? When you've been through it once (which won't take you long) it's got nothing left to offer, and that's not good value for money.

THE BOTTOM LINE
It looks tempting, but don't be fooled. If you're a games enthusiast then you won't really enjoy this for long. If you're a cartoon fan, there are a lot cheaper ways to watch them.

24 PERCENT

EURO SOCCER

As the season drew to a close, several players took advantage of the unusually clement weather and sun bathed on the pitch.

Game: Euro Soccer
Publisher: Flair Software
Author: Creative Edge
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

Play was suspended for five minutes when Bill heard that he was this month's lucky Premium Bond winner.

It's all here – vicious fouls, random goal keeping and real referees.

Until the point when I scored my first goal, *Euro Soccer* seemed fine. I must admit to being a little miffed when – as I was preparing to kick off – upon hearing the whistle, three members of the computer's team ran up to my centre-forward, kicked him in the shins, relieved him of the ball and proceeded with it towards my goal line. But I'm no stranger to injustice, and the incident was quickly forgotten as I warmed to the *Euro Soccer* way of doing things. The players, while a little gangly, have a splendid repertoire of smoothly animated leaps, slides, lunges, headers and, er, whatever it's called when you bounce the ball off your chest – those things. There's a proper referee running about, too. And the crowd seemed wonderfully enthusiastic, chanting, roaring and cheering as appropriate. I was in a buoyant mood, therefore, as I re-acquired the ball, dribbled it up the pitch, dodged the defence, reached the penalty area, lined up the shot, kicked, and...

"Your team stand around like garden gnomes"

And it was then that, deep in my subconscious, a little alarm bell began to ring. Although I did, in fact, appear to have scored – the crowd were hysterical, and the score was 1-0 – the ball hadn't technically entered the goal mouth, actually having become lodged in mid-air just above the line.

More to the point, what had happened to the computer's goalkeeper? My shot had merely been of the probing, testing-the-waters variety, taken from a fair distance out and gently arcing towards the goalie – an easy catch. But he'd just stood there, oblivious. It transpires that, apart from the occasional moment of inspiration (I'd love to know how, for example, every once in a while they're able to stop a ball that's a good five feet away from their fingertips), *Euro Soccer* goalkeepers are uniformly useless. *(It's a kind of Zen thing. – Ed)* This is all very fine and dandy when they belong to the opposing team, but a real bummer when they're all that's between your goal and the ball, and they certainly make you appreciate the faster-than-lightning reflexes of the keepers in that certain other football game.

Then there's the air of bad sportsmanship that pervades the game. I was prepared to put that first foul down to boyish high spirits, the excitement of the opening minutes, but they just went on and on doing it. And the ref didn't bat an eyelid. My players were falling like flies, so I decided to return fire, and soon discovered that the only way to take the ball from another *Euro Soccer* player is to bring him down with a hard kick in the back of the knees and trample over his recumbent body. There's no such thing as a fair tackle in this game, so perhaps it's just as well there are no free kicks or penalties either.

And how on earth does *Euro Soccer* decide which player to give you control of at any particular instance? The first choice generally seems to be the chap who's lying on the ground, clutching his shins from the last time he dared to take possession. Then, if that doesn't seem to work out, control most likely passes to the fellow who's some distance behind the opposing player (who, by this time, is well into your penalty area) with no reasonable chance of catching up with him. And finally, as an absolute last resort, you might just (just) be allowed to make use of the guy who's standing directly in the path of the oncoming player, though usually by now it's too late for that and it's all up to your goalie (ie you're another goal down). Needless to say, while all this is going on, the rest of your team are standing around like garden gnomes.

There are loads of other things I want to get off my chest (like the way the scrolling rarely keeps up with the the ball, or the huge amount of disk accessing between matches – inexcusable in a game that demands one meg of memory, or the silly cartoon drawings that crop up from time to time and are completely out of keeping with the rest of the game) but space is tight, so I'll just point out that, if it's a side-view football game you're after, *Man United Europe* would be a far more sensible choice.

● *JONATHAN DAVIES*

Above: The game comes complete with subtitles for the hard of understanding.

Left: A map of Europe – with flags.

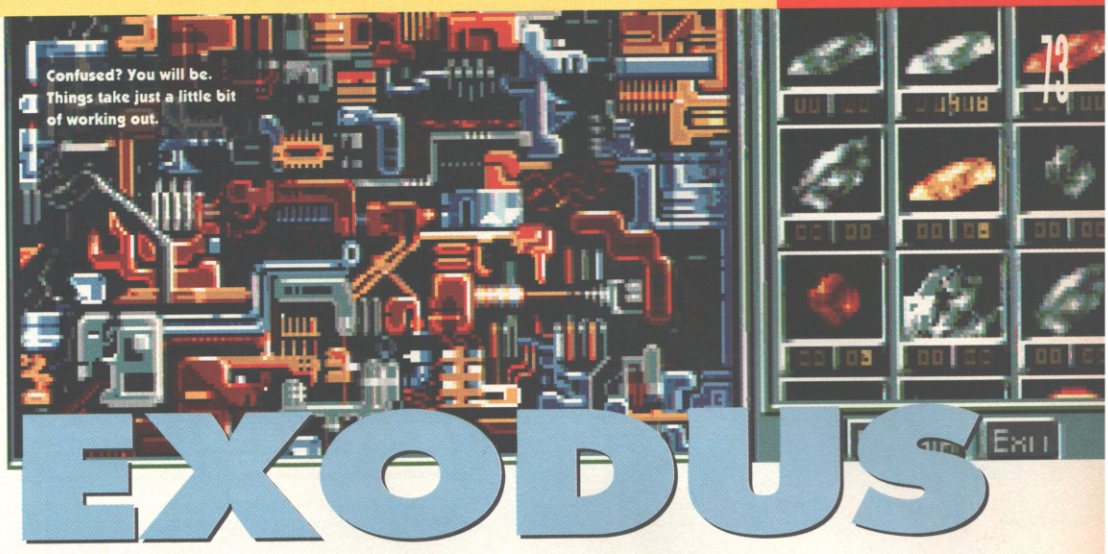
UPPERS When all's said and done, the graphics, sound and general feel of the thing are absolutely fine.

DOWNERS Chronically bad goalkeepers, very silly tackling, hopeless control over the players, too slow scrolling, lots of rough edges, too much disk accessing... *(Snip. – Ed)*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Initially quite promising, with the foundations of a decent football game, but it just hasn't been followed through properly. There are too many bits missing and far too many silly flaws.

39 PERCENT

Game: Exodus 3010: The First Chapter
Publisher: Demonware
Authors: In house
Price: £29.99
Release: Out now



It's by Demonware and not Leon Uris or Bob Marley at all.

This is the sort of game that always gets given to the freelancers. Tim (of the Tucker clan, that is) took one look at it and thought, "Hmm, space exploration game with lots of shipbuilding, material replenishing and engine maintenance – it's going to take months just to get through the manual. What sucker can I pass this on to?" And look who was caught at the weak moment. *(Ah, so it had nothing to do with those photos we threatened to publish? – Ed)*

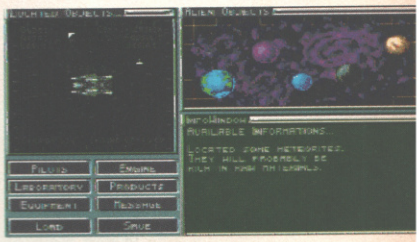
His assumption, though, wasn't completely correct. Sure, it takes an age to work out what the hell you're supposed to be doing, but not because the manual's the size of the Hong Kong telephone directory, the exact opposite, in fact. It's thin to the point of non-existence, leaving it up to you to try and work out what the heck's going on largely by trial and error.

"You haven't got a clue what you're supposed to do"

The game set-up is pretty complex. Basically, you are the captain of a ship carrying the last remnants of mankind (who are all in suspended animation) on a search for a new planet. For some reason you're hideously understocked on raw materials, tools, fighter ships, everything. This is a pity, as you're about to run into some very nasty aliens. Your task is to use the raw materials at your disposal to build ships and wake up suitable pilots so that they can fly out and find raw materials and other goodies. This could be as simple as picking up a silicon-packed meteor or as tricky as facing whole alien fleets.

You start off in the main cockpit which has a scanner showing you other objects that appear in your vicinity and icons which you click on to take you to other sections. These are: the engine room – which can be damaged in battle and may need certain materials to be repaired; the laboratory – where you can combine raw elements to make new alloys; the production chamber – where ships are built; and the Equipment Room – which is just a hangar. You flit around between these areas building and arming and, erm, that's about it.

Things get more arcadey when you get outside the ship. The box describes these sequences as 3D action, but don't get too excited. All it means is that you can move up, down, left, right, forwards and backwards, which might sound great, but because it requires both the keyboard and joystick in conjunction, you need three hands at least. (You can use a mouse, but it's a lot less accurate.) The graphics aren't exactly stunning either, just pixel stars and featureless ships.

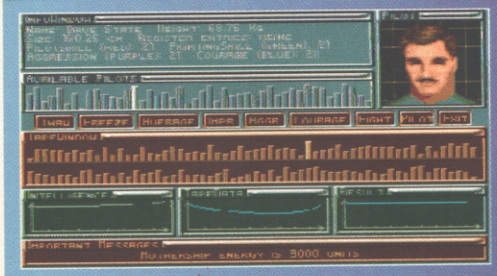


The control interface isn't as horrendous as some, but it's nothing special, either.

The main fault with *Exodus* is that it's just too complicated, and too difficult (and not helped by the lack of a decent manual). Intuitive it ain't. It's all very plodding, and not helped by constant disk accessing. And since it doesn't recognise a second drive, the game is a bit of a nightmare unless you've got a hard drive. It does have some attractive screens and the strategic elements – deciding what to make with the materials at your disposal – are mildly diverting. If you like devoting two hours a night for half a year to solving a game *Exodus* might appeal.

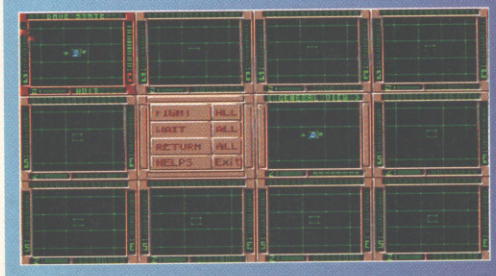
● *DAVE GOLDER*

STARTING FROM BASICS



First pick your pilot. There are 46 from which to choose, and each has his own combination of aggression, prowess, flying and fighting skills. You have to thaw them out of suspended animation and up to 10 pilots can be defrosted at any time.

Next you have to build your ship. Talk about do it yourself! You might even have to build some of the components. But if you don't have the raw materials, you're stuffed.



Arming your ship comes next. Oh, did I mention you have to build your own weapons as well. Back one stage if you haven't already. Then stick a pilot in the cockpit – they're dead useful.

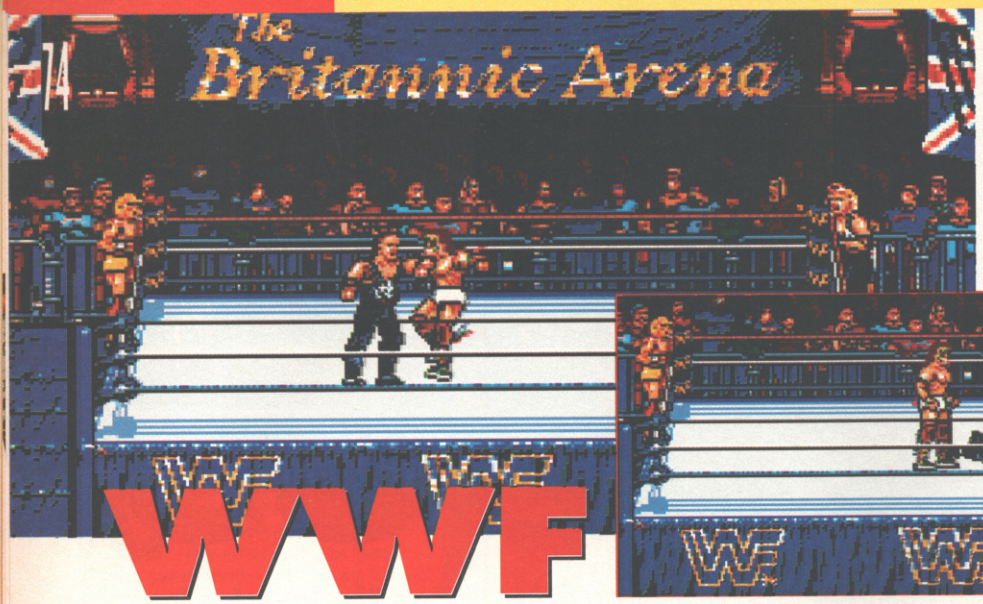
And finally it's out into the great black yonder to do battle with neatly arranged geometric shapes. Oh, so that's what they meant by 3D. You can control up to 10 ships simultaneously (if you're a mutant octopod).

UPPERS It's certainly something to get your teeth into – the equivalent of a slab of toffee that's been in the freezer for the last six months.

DOWNERS You need three hands for the arcade section. The learning curve is more like a learning flight of very steep steps, with the bottom one about two-hundred feet high. It's not helped by the crap manual and tons of disk accessing.

THE BOTTOM LINE
It tries hard, far too hard, and ends up confusing, difficult and slow. Only risk it if you have a hard drive.

58 PERCENT



Oh look, that's the Ultimate Warrior. We really ought to feel his power, don't you think? ***(Feel the power of the ultimate P45. – Ed)***

WWF EUROPEAN RAMPAGE

But whatever happened to Kendo Nagasaki?

Game: WWF European Rampage
Publisher: Ocean
Author: Arc Developments
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now
Other details: One meg required. Honestly.

Meanwhile, in another part of town, four men with strange accents and even stranger costumes are discussing this evening's entertainment.

THE CAST
Macho Man Randy Savage™
Ultimate Warrior™
Hulk Hogan™
Bret 'Hitman' Hart ™

ACT I
The locker room.
RANDY: Great build-up. Wasn't that a great build-up?
HULK: Yeah, Ult. I loved that digitised growl.
RANDY: Me too. And I'm Randy.
HULK: Sorry, man.
RANDY: That's okay. We all look uncannily similar.
BRET: Maybe it's because we're so small.
HULK: Who you callin' small?
BRET: No, but we are. We looked better than this in Ocean's first wrestling game.
RANDY: And that's not saying much.
BRET: Anyway, let's get out there! We've got some Nasty Boys to flatten!
HULK: Woop!
RANDY: Way to go!
ULTIMATE: Feel the power of the Ultimate Warrior.

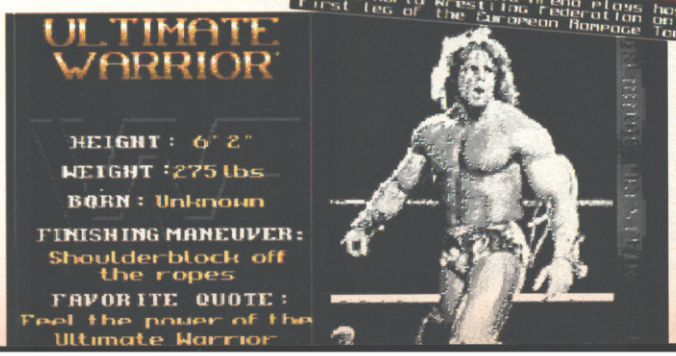
ACT II
The wrestling ring.
Scene I
BRET: Have we started yet? Oof! Ooyah! Someone could have told me.
RANDY: Try your special move, Hulk!
BRET: Bret! The name's Bret, man!
RANDY: Sorry, buddy. Do your special move!
BRET: I ain't got no special move.
There ain't no special moves in this game, man.
HULK: We don't all just look the same. We are the same.
BRET: Ow! Ooch!
RANDY: This didn't happen in the rehearsal.
HULK: Looks like we lost. At least, I assume so. The screen's gone black.
Scene II
BRET: Okay, this time we can do it.
HULK: His energy's right down! Pin him to the floor and we've done it!
RANDY: Er, okay. Uh... ye-argh!
HULK: Idiot! I said pin him down, and you stamped on him! And now he's gone and tripped you up.
RANDY: I tried man, I tried! But it ain't easy with these controls.
ULTIMATE: Feel the power of the Ultimate Warrior.
BRET: We've lost again. One more go?
HULK: But that'll mean sitting through hours of disk accessing and swapping (even though we've got two disk drives) and stupid news reports.
RANDY: Yeah. Count me out.
BRET: Me too, then.

ACT III
The locker room.
BRET: ...so what you're telling me, in effect, is that the game consists of running around the ring trying to shake off your opponent for long enough to turn around and punch him.
RANDY: That's right.
BRET: And that if you punch him enough he'll fall over and you can start stamping on him.
RANDY: Yeah.
BRET: And that if you manage to get his energy down far enough, and then knock him down, you can then 'pin' him for a count of three and you've won the match.
RANDY: That's right, buddy. Except the game never seems quite sure whether you want to stamp on your opponent or pin him, as the controls for both moves are the same. It's really frustrating.
BRET: Jeez, that sucks.
HULK How about that 'jumping off the posts' stuff, and all the different arm and head locks?
RANDY: Ah, forget it, man. Punching and kicking's what this game's all about.
HULK: So once you've worked that much out, it's really easy to finish. Doesn't it get any tougher?
RANDY: Hah! Only in the sense that your opponent follows you round the ring more tightly, so you can't turn around to hit him. And that every time one of them goes off and lets his partner come on, he gets practically all his energy back so you've got to start all over again.
ULTIMATE: Feel the power of the Ultimate Warrior.
RANDY: And although you're meant to be fighting in cities all over Europe, you actually just keep meeting the same three teams over and over again. Only somehow they've got better since last time. Sorry, pal. WWF wrestling might be an awesome sport, but it ain't never gonna work as a computer game.

● *JONATHAN DAVIES*

"Feel the power of the Ultimate Warrior"

Right: A commentator in a blazer. Below: Feel the power of the Ultimate Warrior.



THE BOTTOM LINE

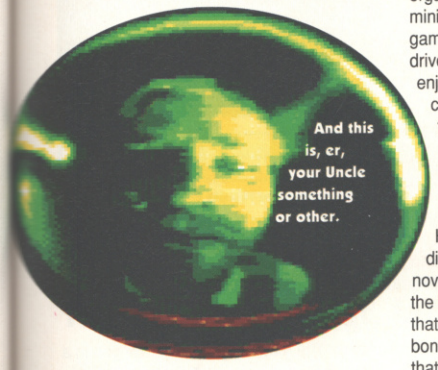
HULK: Beats *WWF Wrestlemania* on glitz, but at least the first game had actual wrestling in. This is just a crap beat-'em-up.
ULTIMATE: Feel the power of the Ultimate Warrior.

18 PERCENT

WAXWORKS

Madame Tussaud's was never anything like this.

Game: Waxworks
Publisher: Accolade
Author: Horrorsoft
Price: £34.99
Release: Out now



Not that I'm trying to sound tough or anything, but I honestly don't believe I'll see the day when I'm frightened by a computer game. (With the possible exception of *The Med Conflict – Battleset 3*.) Scariness and computers simply don't go together – something I think Horrorsoft are going to have to take on board at some point. (I just don't want to be the one that tells them, that's all.) To their credit they've tried very hard indeed to make *Waxworks* frightening, sticking in lots of zombies, blood and horribly mutilated corpses, but the game's only ever really scary in a Hammer Horror film sort of way (ie not actually all that scary).

In fact, the most frightening thing about *Waxworks* is that it comes on 10 (eek!) disks. (When I first opened the box I wondered if maybe something had gone horribly wrong at the disk duplicating factory.) Although playing *Waxworks* off floppy disks is just about feasible – the disks are organised sensibly to minimise swapping – the game ideally wants a hard drive if it's going to be enjoyed to the full. And, of course, it might be a bit more frightening if sudden encounters in dark tunnels with horrific monsters weren't preceded by fifteen seconds of disk accessing.

Anyway – Monsters? Tunnels? Horribly mutilated corpses? I'm afraid I didn't quite make it to the end of the novella-type-thing that vies for space in the box. (I had to stop when I got to the bit that said: "There were teeth marks on the bone. Human teeth marks!") But it seems that you're in a waxworks, trying to rescue your twin brother who's been possessed by the devil. There are four horrific exhibits which you can step into and spookily find yourself transported to other worlds.

There's the Ancient Egypt exhibit, where you're running around a maze of passages in a pyramid trying to evade the clutches of some Egyptian-looking baddies. There's the Victorian London exhibit, where you turn up to find you match the description of Jack the Ripper, and get chased round a maze of streets by the police. There's the cemetery, which is a maze of graves patrolled by ghosts and zombies. And there's the mine, which is haunted by dead miners and the monsters that killed them, and laid out in the form of – yes – a maze.

You probably spotted the common theme there: mazes. I've hated mazes ever since I got stuck in the one at Longleat for a whole afternoon. (Although I went back several years later – and several feet taller, so I could see over the hedges – and took that sucker out.) And the overriding feeling when you're playing *Waxworks* is one of wandering round some 3D mazes getting chased by monsters. Much like *3D Monster Maze* on the ZX81, in fact. This was quite depressing, especially in the cemetery, which is only a maze because it won't let you walk through the huge gaps between gravestones.

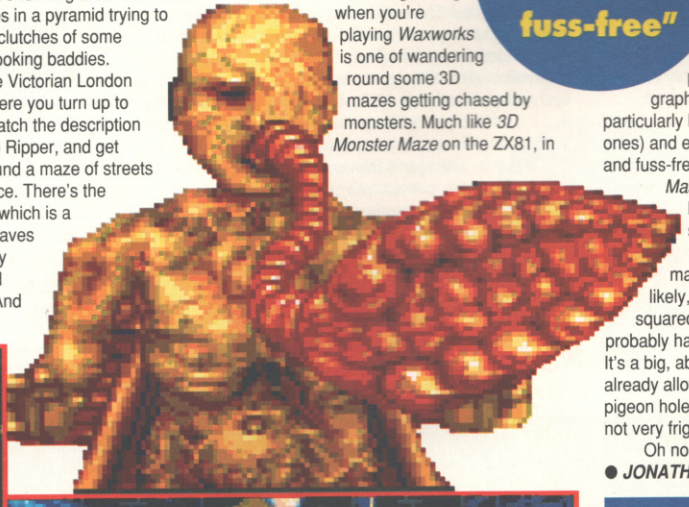
"Everything is generally slick and fuss-free"

Luckily there's more to *Waxworks* than that, though. There's lots of picking-up-objects-and-hoping-to-find-uses-for-them-later to be done. And there's the rather less-than-successful fighting side of things, where you and your opponent jab hopefully at each other with weapons, with the one whose hit points run out first dying. The graphics are pretty good (I particularly liked the Victorian London ones) and everything is generally slick and fuss-free. It's a bit sort of *Dungeon Master* in a way, only rather less action-point-and-spell oriented.

If you don't mind the heavy maze emphasis (you will, most likely, have to resort to pencil and squared paper in the end), you'll probably have a lot of fun with *Waxworks*. It's a big, absorbing game, and I've already allotted it its own extra-large pigeon hole at The Last Resort. It's just not very frightening, that's all.

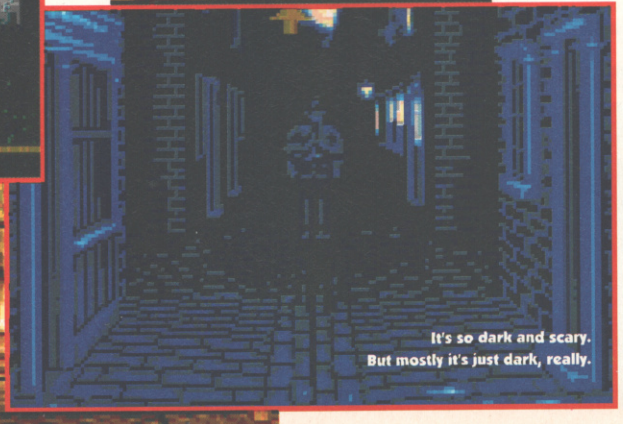
Oh no. I think I'm getting a cold.

● *JONATHAN DAVIES*



We really should say something about feeling a little cross, shouldn't we?

This architect's not going to be designing any more pyramids.



It's so dark and scary. But mostly it's just dark, really.

UPPERS Good graphics, lots to do, and the idea of getting sucked into exhibits at a waxworks is a neat one.

DOWNERS Mazes are okay in moderation, but they shouldn't take over the whole game. And the fighting is a bit crap.

THE BOTTOM LINE
It's definitely much better than I was expecting. It did keep keep me awake for a couple of nights – but not by giving me nightmares.

70 PERCENT

PREMIER MANAGER

As well as league games you also play in cup competitions.

When Conference results come up on the telly, you make the tea. Here they're essential.

got to start somewhere.

Welling United?! Well, everyone's

Game: Premier Manager
Publisher: Gremlin
Authors: Realms of Fantasy
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

Soccer management simulations seem like a strange idea don't they? If playing arcade soccer games is a sad alternative to playing the real thing, are management sims sad alternatives to sad alternatives to playing the real thing? I mean, you don't even have to wiggle joysticks. The fact is that management games have a completely different appeal from soccer arcade games, and have more in common with god games. The satisfaction comes from manipulating parameters in the game world and watching the results. This can be enormously satisfying, as anyone who's played *Populous 2* knows. The fact that it's set in a football environment gives it a different flavour, but that's the appeal.

Premier Manager is the latest football management sim to tempt you to dip into your pocket, and let me say right now that it's a good one. Too often management games are overly complex, which although adding realism, does take away from the enjoyment rather. While you're wading through screen after screen determining what shoelaces your team are going to wear during the match, you start to lose any interest in whether they're actually going to win it or not. *Premier Manager* avoids this by giving you the option to tweak parameters but still making it easy to get stuck into a few games and make a few changes on the way.

You start the game as manager of a Conference club and you have to get yourself into the position of manager in the premier league. This could be by taking your team up the divisions, but it's more likely that you'll be offered jobs on other teams if you impress with your ability as a manager. You can play with up to four players at once, which is a nice idea in theory but I can't see it being the most rivetting of multi-player games. Nah, put the kettle on, load it up and kiss your social life goodbye – it's the only way with a game like this.

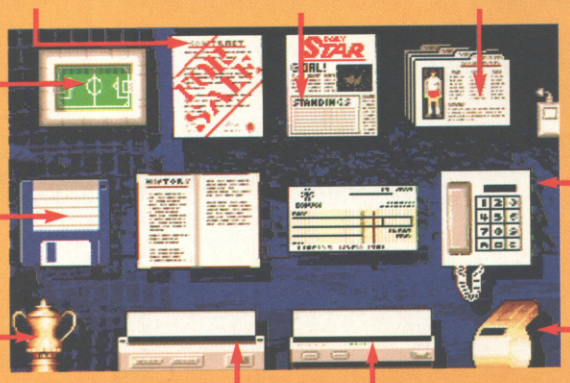
After entering your name and choosing a conference club to manage (from such glamorous luminaries as Welling United or Stalybridge Celtic), you're taken to the main screen. Here you'll find 12 icons which you click on to get into various parts of the game and tweak things. The first icon takes you into the ground improvements and sponsors screen, where you decide how much to spend on your pitch and stands, and what sponsors you want for the boards around the ground (you can even be sponsored by AMIGA POWER). Other screens enable you to transfer players and buy up talent from other teams, look at the league tables, rearrange your squad, work on your finances, look at future fixtures (in all leagues) and – wait for it – play a match. You decide what formation your team will be playing in and what kind of playing style they'll be adopting, and then you get going. The match is played out for you in a small box in the corner of the screen, with indications of who has the ball and where it is on the field. The play is watchable and definitely adds something, but you can speed it all up if you just want to get straight to the results. You get results from all divisions, so you can check on other teams' progress. It all gets very exciting, especially when your team starts winning.

"A very enjoyable and addictive gaming experience"

There are plenty of management games out there, ranging from the tedious to the compulsive, and this one definitely falls into the latter category. It's not as complex as *Graham Taylor's Soccer Challenge*, but it doesn't suffer for that and certainly succeeds in giving a very enjoyable, and somewhat addictive, gaming experience. If you fancy yourself as a bit of a Kenny Dalglish, this game's for you.

● *TIM TUCKER*

HOW TO RUN A FOOTBALL TEAM



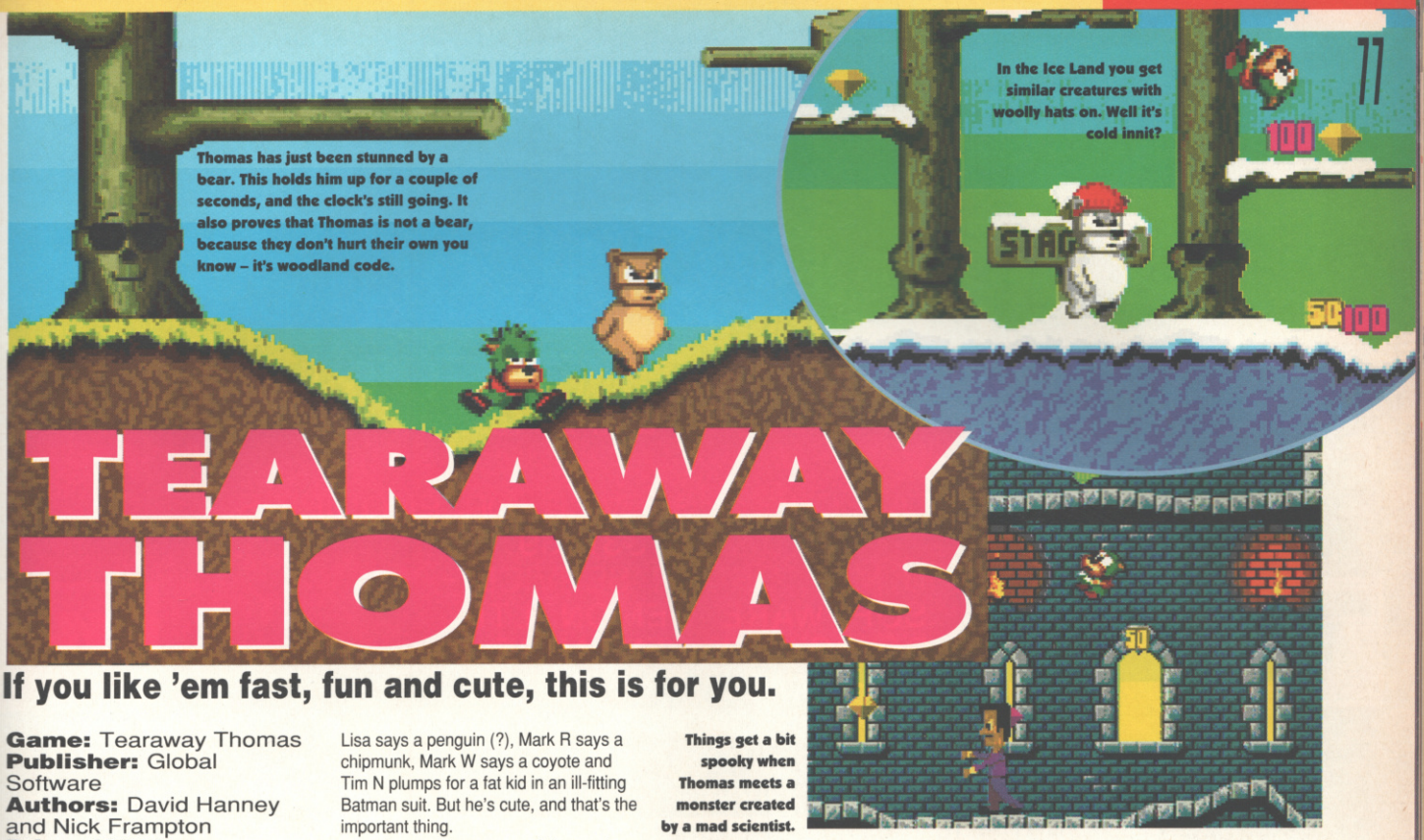
UPPERS It's got enough in it to make for an interesting challenge, but not too much to bog you down. Genuinely exciting and certainly very playable.

DOWNERS Same as any other management game, it doesn't present an awful lot to look at, and if you're after the thrills and spills of football you won't find them here.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Premier Manager is an excellent example of the footy management genre. It's enjoyable, the stats and figures are there if you 'em. You'll be hooked before you know it. A contender for best soccer management game on the Amiga.

80 PERCENT



TEARAWAY THOMAS

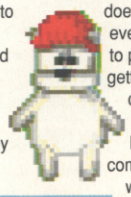
If you like 'em fast, fun and cute, this is for you.

Game: Tearaway Thomas
Publisher: Global Software
Authors: David Hanney and Nick Frampton
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

You've heard it far too many times I'm sure – console-esque platform cutie, or something similar. But come on, this one's just asking for it. The manual gives you little clues like "the tearaway species resides on the planet 'CINOS EHT GOHEGDEH', a little left of the star system Magadriver". Add to this more anagrams like Dr Oiram and his assistant Minedto and you can see that *Tearaway Thomas* is taking on the consoles at their own game.

Now Tearaway Thomas is a very cute creature, which is a good start for a console-type platform game. We've been discussing this in the office and trying to decide what kind of cute creature Thomas actually is – Jacquie says a dog, Lisa says a penguin (?), Mark R says a chipmunk, Mark W says a coyote and Tim N plumps for a fat kid in an ill-fitting Batman suit. But he's cute, and that's the important thing.

As we all know, one of the most impressive things about *Sonic* is its speed, and *Tearaway* does for the Amiga what *Sonic* did for the Mega Drive. This is so scorchingly fast, I hardly thought it possible. You use the fire button to bounce Thomas around the platforms collecting gems, and you have to collect a certain number before you can leave the level. All this must be done in a time limit too, so the speed is not just a flashy extra, it's an integral part of the game.



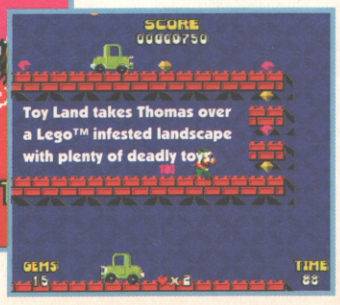
Things get a bit spooky when Thomas meets a monster created by a mad scientist.

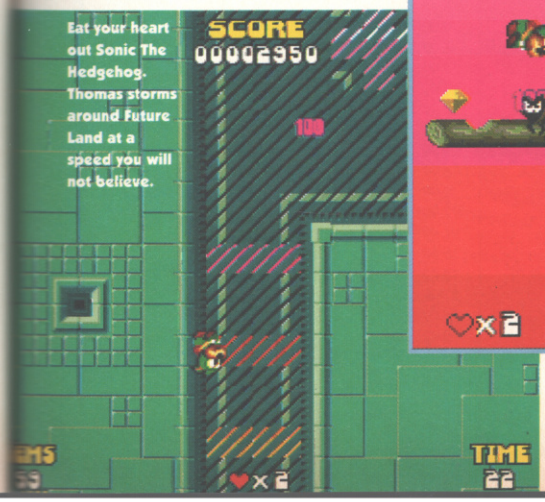
It makes for a great gaming experience, because you're forced to really whizz round those platforms to get out at the end of it. Of course your way does not go unimpeded – there's everything from bears and birds to penguins and ghosts getting in your way. You can't actually be killed by the beasties, but coming into contact with them dazes you and holds you up for two seconds. This isn't what you want when time is of the essence, but you can avoid being stunned and get extra points by jumping on their heads (a la *Mario/Sonic*).You lose a life if time is up and you haven't reached the end of the level. You get three lives.

It's loads of fun. You may not be overcome with awe as you look at the screen shots on this page, and the graphics aren't utterly stupendous by any means, but they do the job and look all cute and cuddly. More importantly the gameplay is wonderful and you can get anifty turn of speed. With 50 different levels in five different worlds plus special bonus rooms and levels you certainly get a lot of it too. Perhaps the only major criticism is that the game plays pretty similarly all the way through – you don't actually get all that much variety. Still, if you enjoy what you get it'll keep you going for months.

"The gameplay is wonderful"

● *TIM TUCKER*





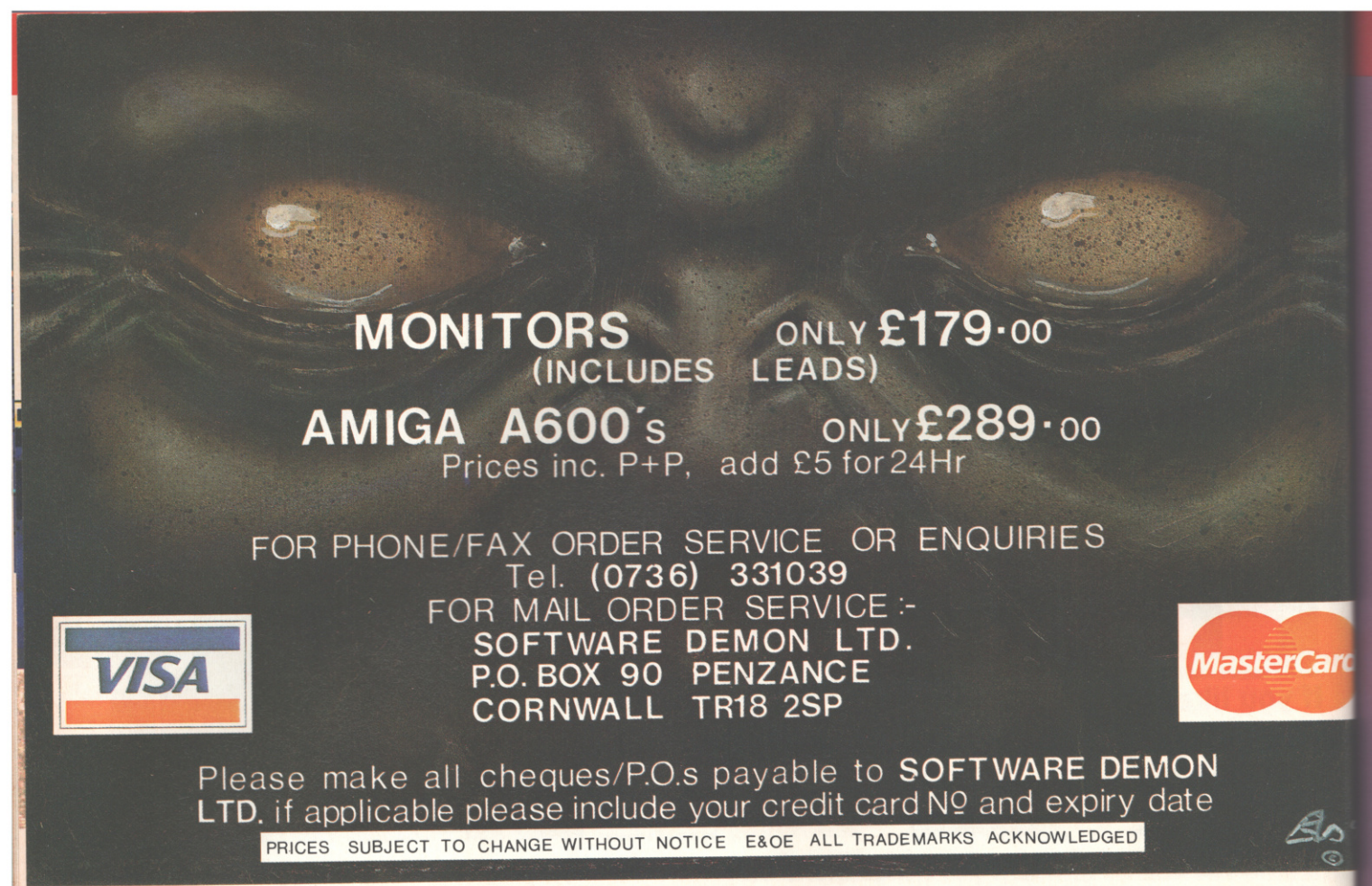
UPPERS Fast. Very fast. You won't find faster on the Amiga, that's for sure. It's also addictive and captivating, and cute in a not too sweet and sticky way. With 50 levels, it's big too.

DOWNERS Too much of the same makes it slightly monotonous. Perhaps some variation would have helped.

THE BOTTOM LINE

I really liked this game. It's great fun to play, and while being nice to look at doesn't induce a multi-coloured headache after five minutes. At £25.99 though it really should have a bit more depth.

79 PERCENT



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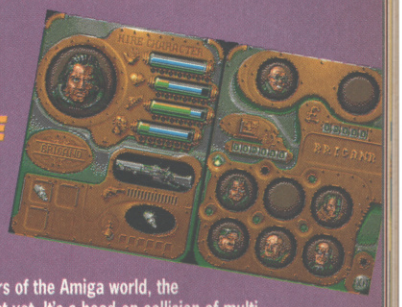
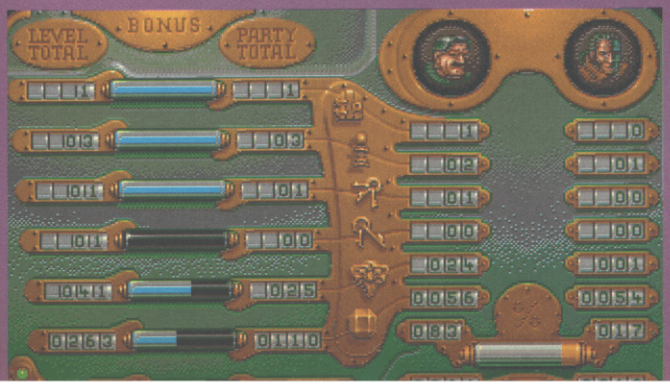


Programmers extraordinaire and pop stars of the Amiga world, the Bitmap Brothers', latest may be their finest moment yet. It's a head-on collision of multi-player shoot-'em-up finery and thumping music. Which is why the men-in-shades are offering one lucky AMIGA POWER reader a Very Powerful set of Roland speakers. This tasty piece of kit would normally set you back about 200 quid, so we're talking serious soundsmanship here.

But that's not all! Because the winner will also get a pair of shades and a leather jacket – with which you can instantly transform yourself into an ultra-cool programmer. All you'll need then is someone with a camera to take some moody black and white shots of you – then fame and fortune is just around the corner.

And hey! Being so proud of their latest masterwork, those lovely Bitmap Brothers will be giving 10 copies of *The Chaos Engine* to runners up. Like, wow.



STARS IN YOUR EYES

To stand a chance of winning, we want you to answer these three simple questions:

1. What's Bitmap Brother Eric Matthews' nickname?
2. What was the first game released under the Bitmap Brothers monicker?
3. Which television show does Babbage appear in?

RULES AND REGULATIONS

- Employees of Future, Renegade and Ray Ban are not eligible to enter.
- The editor's decision is final. No, really.
- The closing date for entries is 28th February, 1993.

THE AMIGA POWER ARCADE

While the US Gold programmers were working 37 hours a day trying to get *Street Fighter II* out in time for the big Christmas rush, we were all reflecting here at AMIGA POWER on how long it was since there was a really major coin-op licence aimed at the top of the charts. We couldn't actually remember, so we decided that the only way to work it out was to dig out every single coin-op conversion we could find and operate a process of elimination. We said 'Hey, while we're about it, why don't we compile a sort of A-Z file of every Amiga arcade conversion ever, as a kind of gigantic buyers'-guide-cum-Bottom Line type of thing?' 'Great idea,' we said, 'why don't we do just that? Two instalments should pretty much cover it. Of course, we'd have to come up with some sort of special rating system, too. We could rate how good each game was in its own right in the arcades, say how well it had been converted, and then mark it on how good it was on the Amiga. This figure wouldn't, of course, necessarily be directly related to the other two, because of the wide variety of factors involved. After all, a game could be a poor conversion, but score well because the differences from the original actually improved it as a game, while on the other hand something that was technically well converted could still be crap on the Amiga, possibly because (say) the thing that made it impressive in arcades was some amazing graphical feature that looks completely weedy and useless on a little monitor in your bedroom instead of a 26-inch screen in a dark and loud arcade. Or, the game could be a really terrible conversion which was totally different to the coin-op, but still a good game in a completely different way.'

'That sounds like a job for Stuart Campbell,' we said.

1943
(Kixx)

This is a great way to start an A-Z, I must say. Perhaps we should have just called it a 1-Z and had done with it. Anyway, *1943* is a great example of just how badly arcade games can be converted. It doesn't look like the original, it doesn't sound like the original, it doesn't play like the original, it doesn't feel like the original in any way whatsoever. It also displays screenshots on the box which distinctly imply that the conversion includes the coin-op's two-player simultaneous mode, which it doesn't, which is totally and utterly inexcusable, if not actually illegal. Really awful.

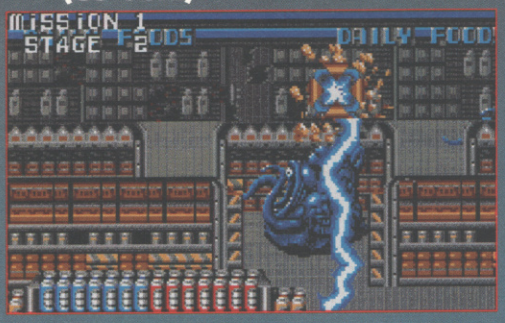
ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 2
AMIGA GAME RATING: 1

ACTION FIGHTER
(Activision)

Converted from an arcade game that appeared to have a Sega Master System for a heart, this is nonetheless quite a sweet little vertical zapper with some groovy touches to take your mind off the chunktabulous graphics.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 8
AMIGA GAME RATING: 6

ALIEN STORM
(US Gold)



A classic example of the number one failing of coin-op conversions – being based on an arcade game with huge, sexy graphics and really shallow gameplay, and transported across to a relatively weedy bit of hardware which just can't carry it off properly. There's nothing really missing here, it's just that it's completely useless as a computer game.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 5
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 7
AMIGA GAME RATING: 3

ALTERED BEAST
(The Hit Squad)

Well, I don't know what it's been 'altered' from, but it's definitely a 'beast'...

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 5
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 5
AMIGA GAME RATING: 3

Asteroids
(PD)

One of the all-time classic arcade games (if not the greatest arcade game ever), brought absolutely flawlessly to the Amiga. Turn the lights off, get your fingers on the keyboard, and imagine it's 1979 again. Utterly, utterly gorgeous. There's nothing else to be said on the matter.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 10
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 10
AMIGA GAME RATING: 10

ATOMIC ROBOKID
(Activision)

It's hard to put your finger on exactly why some coin-op conversions end up looking so shabby and un-arcade-like, but, well, they just do. This is one of them.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 5
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 5
AMIGA GAME RATING: 3

BADLANDS
(Domark)

Super Sprint was all very well and good, but *Super Off-Road Racer* raised the stakes in the overhead-view racing genre, and this was a bit of a backwards step. The little Amiga screen can't quite carry off the dramatic effect of the homing missiles and stuff, either. A decent job, but stick with *Super Off-Road*.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 8
AMIGA GAME RATING: 5

BEAST BUSTERS
(Activision)

In the arcades, this was a gloriously big'n'butch zombie-slaughtering epic, but on the Amiga the graphics are a trifle sad and timid by comparison. And in common with most *Op Wolf*-type games, it's not really the same when you're not leaning into a big steel machine-gun pointed threateningly at the screen.

A-Z OF GAMES

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 8
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 5
AMIGA GAME RATING: 5

BIG RUN
(Storm)

A bit of an average driving game, lifted a little bit out of the mire by some interesting scenery, but the Amiga version bore no relation whatsoever to the real thing except in having the same car graphics. A really dire conversion, and a pitiful game in its own right into the bargain.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 6
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 1
AMIGA GAME RATING: 1

BIONIC COMMANDO
(Kixx)

The arcade game was quite novel and fun, but the conversion was spectacularly inept to the point of total unplayability. Not so much a commando as a cub scout.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 4
AMIGA GAME RATING: 1

BLACK TIGER
(US Gold)

Bog-standard hack-'em-up, bog-standard conversion, just generally bog-standard.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 6
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 7
AMIGA GAME RATING: 5

BONANZA BROS
(US Gold)

This is a bit of a funny one. The arcade game was simplistic and slow, but somehow (that old indefinable 'Factor X' again) it was a real hoot to play. The Amiga port featured everything that was present in the original, although it looked a lot cruder, but somehow it just wasn't any fun. The seriously tiny letterbox area that you actually got to play in might have had something to do with it, though.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 8
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 7
AMIGA GAME RATING: 6

BUBBLE BOBBLE
(The Hit Squad)

Lots missing from this conversion, like the secret rooms of the original, and the graphics look really horrible and computery compared to the glowingly bright neon primary colours of the coin-op, but this captures the feel of its subject matter better than just about anything else around, and that's what really matters.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 9
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 7
AMIGA GAME RATING: 8

CABAL
(The Hit Squad)

One of the best *Operation Wolf*-type shooting games around, distinguished by the fact that you can actually see your character and hence avoid some of the bullets that get fired at him. There's a nifty two-player mode too, and it's all jolly good fun. (And just like the coin-op, as well).

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 8
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 8
AMIGA GAME RATING: 8

Chase HQ
(The Hit Squad)

A big, bold, beefy and butch coin-op comes over to the Amiga and looks comprehensively weedy and pathetic. The only thing worse than the nauseating graphics was – well, everything else, really. Really quite amazingly poor in every imaginable way.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 3
AMIGA GAME RATING: 2

CISCO HEAT
(Mirrorsoft)

Cisco Heat barely deserves the title 'conversion' at all, to be honest. The design of the courses is completely dissimilar to the arcade game's, the graphics are almost totally different, several crucial features don't appear and several which weren't in the coin-op do, but despite everything, this isn't a bad little driving game. Just don't buy it if you want to play *Cisco Heat*.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 8
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 3
AMIGA GAME RATING: 6

COMMANDO
(Elite)

A forgotten classic of yesteryear, brilliantly converted but swimming so far behind the boat that almost nobody actually bought it, which is a bit of a shame. The gameplay's a little thin, but it's action all the way.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 8
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 9
AMIGA GAME RATING: 7

CONTINENTAL CIRCUS
(Mastertronic)

Doesn't half miss the wacky 3D goggles that make the coin-op version give the impression of bits of wreckage flying straight out of the screen at you when you crash, but otherwise a solid conversion of a really simple but fun arcade racing game. It doesn't look like much, but it's plenty entertaining.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 8
AMIGA GAME RATING: 7

CRACK DOWN
(Kixx)

Atmospheric and different coin-op, superbly converted by Arc Developments who went on to have their finest hour with *R-Type II*. A bit slow, but full of really groovy bits that make this well worth seeking out.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 8
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 9
AMIGA GAME RATING: 7

CYBERBALL
(Respray)

American Football, but even less spontaneous and with a bit more violence (and robots). Let's face it, it's a crap idea, it's a crap coin-op, and it's a crap 'Weedyitis Syndrome' conversion too. Yeuch, basically.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 5
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 7
AMIGA GAME RATING: 4

DEFENDER
(Arc)

Jeff Minter, eh? Don't you just love 'im? Well, yes, but only when he keeps his grubby mitts off this, one of the most beautiful and legendary games ever to grace an arcade. Given the conversion commission, old Jeff decided instead to try out a few of his personal theories on gameplay, resulting in a game with truly horrendous mouse control, ridiculous rapid-firing lasers, no hyperspace in keyboard mode, and generally nothing like the feel of Williams' lovely game at all. Something of a tragedy, really.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 10
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 5
AMIGA GAME RATING: 4

DOUBLE DRAGON
(Mastertronic)

Pathetic little sprites, unbelievably low difficulty setting, several minutes of fun for the talentedly-challenged. Crap.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 6
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 6
AMIGA GAME RATING: 3

DOUBLE DRAGON II
(Mastertronic)

Much better-looking than the first effort, and noticeably tougher, making this pretty good fun if you're into iffy beat-'em-ups. Not too crap.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 6
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 8
AMIGA GAME RATING: 6

DOUBLE DRAGON III
(Storm)

Less pretty than either of the first two, less sophisticated, and less fun. Lots less fun. Really very crap indeed.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 5
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 5
AMIGA GAME RATING: 3

DRAGON BREED
(Activision)

Looks a lot blockier and cruder than the lush and dramatic coin-op, and the gameplay's been simplified a quite a bit too, but the core of it's the same and it's a pretty respectable blast.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 8
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 5
AMIGA GAME RATING: 7

DRAGON NINJA
(The Hit Squad)

Looks very like the real thing, but a seriously awful control mechanism makes it almost completely unplayable. Luckily, the real thing was a useless walk-along beat-'em-up, so you're not missing out on anything good anyway.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 3
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 7
AMIGA GAME RATING: 1

DRAGON SPIRIT
(Respray)

A not-much-cop vertically-scrolling blaster, subjected to a really lacklustre port, turns out really sad to look at and even less inspiring to play. Forget it.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 3
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 5
AMIGA GAME RATING: 2

DYNAMITE DUX
(Activision)

This is a bit more like it. *Dynamite Dux* was a run-of-the-mill cutesy beat-'em-up in the arcades, but on the Amiga, where that kind of thing was never very popular, the big Japanese-style cartoony graphics were a bit of a breath of fresh air. Simple brains-off moose-punching fun with bouncy music, this can still put a smile on anybody's face for a while.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 9
AMIGA GAME RATING: 7

DYNASTY WARS
(US Gold)

Another case of 'Never mind the game, let's buy up the licence'. More arcade graphics fail to impress on the small screen, more wafer-thin gameplay turns the punters off by the thousand. Tedious and horrible.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 4
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 5
AMIGA GAME RATING: 2

ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE ROBOT MONSTERS
(The Hit Squad)

Yet another trip to Weedyitis Town, but luckily the graphics were the least important feature of this corking *Robotron*-meets-*Gauntlet* isometric comedy shoot-'em-up, and everything else was converted perfectly. A fix of fun as big as the title.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 8
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 9
AMIGA GAME RATING: 8

E-SWAT
(Kixx)

Previously the subject of the sadly-missed Oh Dear... column, this is the kind of thing that gives coin-op conversions a bad name. Unbelievably slow and unresponsive, and only the most superficial resemblance to the arcade game, this is nasty and tawdry and useless.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 2
AMIGA GAME RATING: 2

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
(Elite)

A very computer-game-y look spoils this port of one of the most popular arcade footy games ever (Tecmo's *World Cup 90*), and it's pretty slow in play, but lovers of the coin-op will forgive the technical shortcomings in favour of the near-identical gameplay. Alright, really.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 6
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 6
AMIGA GAME RATING: 5

EUROPEAN FOOTBALL CHAMP
(Domark)

This game makes the Amiga look really pedestrian as it struggles to emulate some of the coin-op's graphical gymnastics, but if you close your eyes at the zoom-in sections it's a pretty fair effort at reproducing the, er, thrills of the original. A bit of a laugh.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 7
AMIGA GAME RATING: 6

FIGHTING SOCCER
(Activision)

In contrast to the last two games, this is one of the arcade world's least popular football games ever, which means that even the practically-perfect conversion job done on it here was a complete waste of the time of everyone concerned. Don't you just wish that licence acquiring could be done by someone with just the slightest grasp of what they were doing, once in a while?

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 4
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 8
AMIGA GAME RATING: 3

FINAL BLOW
(Storm)

Similarly, a near-flawless copy of one of the world's most useless games. Bung your joystick on autofire and you'll finish it in half an hour.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 3
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 8
AMIGA GAME RATING: 2

FINAL FIGHT
(US Gold)

One of the very few decent beat-'em-ups ever seen in the entire universe, and the subject of an absolutely sterling conversion effort from USG. Okay, it might not have quite as many colours or frames of animation as the coin-op, and the disk-swapping might be a pain in the bum for single drive owners, but the top entertainment has survived completely intact. One of only two beat-'em-ups that ever get played in AMIGA POWER.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 8
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 8
AMIGA GAME RATING: 8

FORGOTTEN WORLDS
(Kixx)

This is just about as good a conversion of the arcade game as you could have asked for, the only problem being that the arcade game (thanks to its rotating joystick-knob directional firing controller) was all but unconvertable in any practical sense. *Forgotten Worlds* looks good, but the control is a mess, and you'll get more frustration than fun from it.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 6
AMIGA GAME RATING: 5

FLYING SHARK
(Activision)

Something went tragically wrong with the colour palette somewhere during the conversion of this lovely vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up, but everything else is absolutely

spot-on. A simple but brilliantly challenging blaster that's still up there with the best of 'em.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 8
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 8
AMIGA GAME RATING: 8

GALAXY FORCE II
(Activision)

Bringing this technically stunning hydraulic coin-op onto the Amiga was a hugely ambitious job, and Activision failed miserably. The graphics were horrible, the 3D was extremely rudimentary, and the shallowness of the coin-op gameplay was hence thrown into sharp relief, to rather unsavoury effect.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 2
AMIGA GAME RATING: 1

GAUNTLET II
(Kixx)

Sadly the original *Gauntlet* never quite made it to the Amiga, and the second game in the popular arcade series just didn't have the same charm as the original, but this port was amazingly accurate, and with a four-player joystick interface hooked up it's still one of the very best multi-player jobs around. Simplistic but entertaining.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 9
AMIGA GAME RATING: 7

GHOSTS'N'GOBLINS
(Elite)

Graphics ported straight from the arcade machine left the programmers only the simple walk-along-and-stab-things gameplay to cope with, and they managed not to mess it up. Very nice.

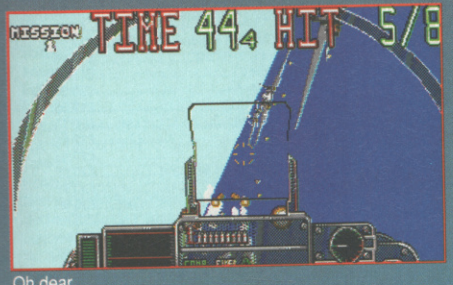
ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 9
AMIGA GAME RATING: 7

GHOULS'N'GHOSTS
(US Gold)

...whereas this also manages the gameplay perfectly, but simplifies the graphics so much that it looks like a C64 game. Well, almost. Still a fine game, but visually tatty enough to be faintly depressing.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 7
AMIGA GAME RATING: 6

G-LOC
(US Gold)



Oh dear.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 4
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 3
AMIGA GAME RATING: 1

GOLDEN AXE
(Mastertronic)

This scrolly beat-'em-up is actually one of the best conversions ever done, but the uselessness of the gameplay coupled with the regular grinding to a complete halt in the middle of a section for disk accessing makes it a nightmare experience for all but those with lots of patience and a really high boredom threshold.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 5
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 8
AMIGA GAME RATING: 3

HARD DRIVIN'
(Domark)

This really looks the part, but sadly the control leaves an awful lot to be desired, with a wildly over-sensitive – and yet at the same time slow enough to respond that it doesn't feel like it's working at all – control system that makes just staying on the road a hard enough job by itself. Add some seriously jerky movement on the complicated bits, and you'll give up in no time.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 8
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 6
AMIGA GAME RATING: 4

HOT ROD
(Activision)

Overhead-view scrolling *Super Sprint* derivative, nice conversion job, lots of multi-player fun but if you can find a copy of it anywhere you're a better man than any of us, which is a bit of a pity.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 6
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 8
AMIGA GAME RATING: 6

HYDRA
(Domark)

'Hydra', interestingly enough, is an anagram of 'Hardy'. This game is about as entertaining as one of dear old Stuart N's letters.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 5
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 7
AMIGA GAME RATING: 3

INDY HEAT
(Storm)

This is like *Super Off Road* without the bumps in the track, which is unfortunate as the bumps in the track were what made *Super Off Road* interesting. Still a good conversion, and a decent enough game if you've got pals round, but miles too easy in one-player mode.

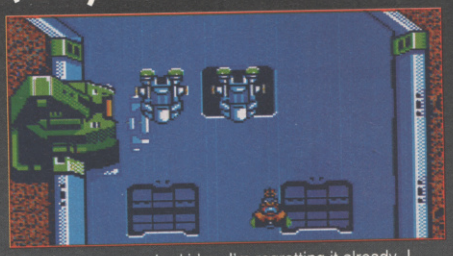
ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 6
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 9
AMIGA GAME RATING: 6

KLAX
(Domark)

This isn't really technically a conversion at all, as the computer game and arcade game were released simultaneously, and as you might imagine from that, the Amiga game is practically indistinguishable from the coin-op. And bloody fab they both are, too.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 9
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 9
AMIGA GAME RATING: 9

LAST DUEL
(Kixx)



This feature was a bad idea. I'm regretting it already. I wonder if anyone's still reading? I'm bored of saying 'average' now. This game is completely, um, candlestick.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 5
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 6
AMIGA GAME RATING: 5

LED STORM
(Kixx)

Wildly average vertically-scrolling driving shoot-'em-up sort of palaver that's moderate fun for the two hours you'll be able to stay awake while playing it.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 5
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 6
AMIGA GAME RATING: 5

LINE OF FIRE
(US Gold)

A huge splattery mess of crude bitmaps that still more or less manages to function in the same way as the super-violent *Op Wolf* clone that was the coin-op. A bit crap, really, but if the arcade game was really your bag you should quite enjoy it. Sort of.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 8
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 5
AMIGA GAME RATING: 5

MERCS
(US Gold)

This doesn't really cut it conversion-wise. It was one of those arcade games which was just a vehicle for some big, impossible-on-an-Amiga-type graphic effects, but if you forget about the coin-op it's a decent enough *Commando*-esque blaster that's only a bit dull and repetitive. It's alright, if you like... *(You're fired. – Ed)*

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 7
AMIGA GAME RATING: 6

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE
(The Hit Squad)

A lovely port of a sexy coin-op, which had a very similar control system to *Forgotten Worlds*, but one which got converted by someone who actually thought about how it was going to feel for the player. Non-stop blasting.

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 8
AMIGA GAME RATING: 8

MR DO RUN RUN
(Electrocoin)

The chances are you'll never have seen or heard of this coin-op, and the chances of your being familiar with the Amiga version are even smaller. Which is a complete tragedy, as it's really brilliant fun. Still, life's like that, eh?

ORIGINAL COIN-OP RATING: 7
CLOSENESS OF CONVERSION: 10
AMIGA GAME RATING: 7

Next month: The N - Z bits ●

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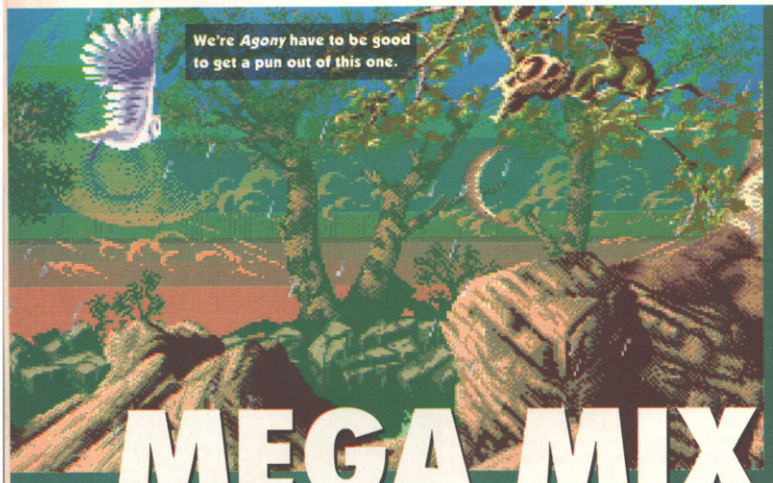
BUDGET

No, don't stop reading yet! There are still huge numbers of reviews for you to check out. Some are good, some are bad, some are indifferent, some have pretty pictures on the boxes, some... *(Just shut up and get on with it. – Ed)*



MEGA MIX

Publisher: Psygnosis
Price: £29.99
Release: Out now

Here's a compilation featuring three fantasy games from Psygnosis. There's a common theme in the sense that they're all designed to look like the cover of a triple live concept album from the mid seventies, but we mustn't hold that against them. The games are *Agony*, *Leander* and *Ork*, all of which have been out for less than a year and were £24.99 each originally, so it looks like a real bargain. But what are the games themselves like?

Agony has been described in our office as "*R-Type* with owls". It's a horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up where you control Alestes the mystical owl. It looks beautiful to the extent that you could be forgiven for thinking you're playing a CDTV game. But as we all know, great graphics do not a great game make, so does it play well too? It's not bad, that's for sure. There's a wonderfully peaceful and mellow feel about it, mainly because of the graphics and animation. However, horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-ups are in their very nature limited but the look and feel of it stop it from getting boring, simply because you carry on playing just to see what comes next. Our original review gave this 78%, and I'd say that's still fair enough.

Leander is a platform game. Again, it looks lovely and there's a heavily mythical element to it. Each level gives you the task of finding an object and then taking it somewhere else. There's a puzzle element to it as well, and plenty of swashbucklingly elegant violence to boot. There's also an adventure game side, as you can pick up gold and then drop into shops that are dotted around to spend your money on a better weapon or stronger armour. To complete a level you have to dip into the odd nook and cranny to find your object, so there's some variety, and a lot of levels to get through too. Original review – 83%, which is maybe a bit high now we've seen some stonking platform games in recent months, but a good game still, no doubt about it.

Above: An *Ork*-ward moment. Left: *Leander* us a quid till the end of the week. *(I give up, I really do. – Ed)*

And finally *Ork* which, er, looks lovely and has a heavily myth... well, you get the idea by now. This is the weakest game in the bundle. There's very impressive three-layer parallax scrolling to it, and the usual professional Psygnosis feel, but it's just dull in the gameplay area, and there's no compulsion to play the thing. It's a platform game, and your character is indescribably ugly and hops about in an irritating way. And if you can't relate to your character, how're you gonna get into it?

The action (if that's what you want to call it) involves finding and picking up a key or a series of objects to enable you to get out and on to the next level. It's got some nice ideas, like the computer terminals that you find around which give you helpful advice such as identifying an object you picked up and how your health level's doing, but it never gets to be a great game. I stick by our original review, 66%.

So you get two good to very good games and one slightly above average for 30 quid. It's got to be worth it hasn't it? I'm not a big fan of these type of games, and to me the graphics don't necessarily add to the enjoyment, mainly because they look so horribly '70s.

But that's my problem, not the games', so I have to say it's well worth the money and should provide you with much entertainment and be done with it.

● *TIM TUCKER*

THE BOTTOM LINE

These games are very professionally done, with all sorts of breathtaking visuals and animation to make you gasp all the way through. Apart from *Ork*, they're good games too, and seeing as they've all been out at full price for less than a year you're looking at a good value package. They all have a (broadly) similar theme to them, so if you like one you'll probably get into the others too.

81 PERCENT

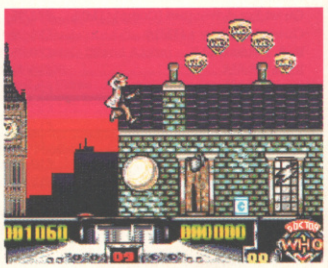
DALEK ATTACK

Publisher: Admiral Software
Price: £15
Release: Out now

Oh dear. It's a Doctor Who game. Doctor Who is one of those programmes, like Blake's Seven, that seemed so great at the time, and you look back on with fondness and say things like, "of course it's not as good as it used to be, and I preferred Patrick Troughton/Jon Pertwee/Tom Baker as the Doctor" until you see an old re-run and realise it was always crap. Which is something it shares with this game.

The plot is standard Doctor Who fare, with some wibble about Daleks taking over the universe while Davros cackles manically in the background like the mad person you always manage to bump into on your way to the newsagents.

Somehow the Timelords get involved and the Doctor has to save the universe and everything.



Now when I was young, you'd never have caught the Doctor flying about the place.

Before you play the game you can choose your Doctor from an array of three. There's the one with the silly hat and the scarf, the one with the silly coat and stupid bow tie and, er, somebody else dressed in incredibly ill-fitting clothes and looking like the last person on earth to be in any way even remotely capable of saving the universe from a race of totally insane and heavily armed robots.

Then comes the shock when the game loads, because you're controlling our Doc on some sort of high-tech floating platform massacring everything in sight with a powerful laser and chucking grenades, smart bombs and all manner of death-dealing heavy weaponry at the enemy. This hardly captures the atmosphere of Doctor Who, and in my day he'd take the lot on with only a sonic

screwdriver and a clapped out old car called Bessie.

The game itself is very poor – it's a horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up and the scrolling is jerky, the graphics are uninspired and the gameplay is simply tedious. Now if you're one of those people who's got all the videos, models and paperback books then you're going to be buying this anyway, aren't you? How sad. For anyone who's after a good game though, don't bother.

● *TIM TUCKER*

THE BOTTOM LINE

It's got hardly anything going for it I'm afraid. The scrolling is so bad it gave me a headache, there's no excitement whatsoever, it doesn't give you the flavour of Doctor Who at all and it still doesn't explain how the Daleks are so powerful when they can't even get up a flight of stairs. Find a better way of spending your fifteen quid.

28 PERCENT

PIPE MANIA

Publisher: Touch Down!
Price: £9.99
Release: Out Now

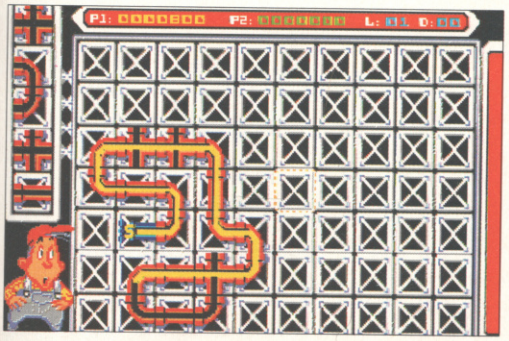
This is one of those puzzle games that you either love or hate, depending which side of the great 'Graphics vs. Playability' debate you're on. *Pipe Mania*'s got flat, 2D graphics and is pretty dull to look at, but there again, so's *Tetris*, and look at what a classic that is. *(Except on the Amiga. – Ed)*

The idea's simple too, you've got a 10x7 grid, somewhere on which is a start point. Down one side of the screen are various sections of pipe, bends, cross-overs, and that sort of thing, and you've got a few seconds to form them into a pipeline before the 'flooz' starts flowing. Quite what this is is never revealed, but suffice to know that if it doesn't flow through a set number of pipes before reaching the end, then it's Game Over time.

As the levels progress you get less time before the gook gets running, obstacles that block up squares on the grid, and one-way pipes to give you all manner of problems. This all adds up to refinements as opposed to new game options, which puts an awful lot of strain on the game idea since you've got to play the same game time after time.

It's a good idea though, and after a few goes when you should be getting bored, you find that you've improved enough to get that little bit further. Even if you should tire, then there's always the two player mode. I'd have thought I guessed that this would be two opposing pipe lines competing for space, but actually you work together and score points for how many of your sections the flooz runs through. It's straightforward stuff, but it's still got a good few miles of wear in it.

● *MARK WINSTANLEY*



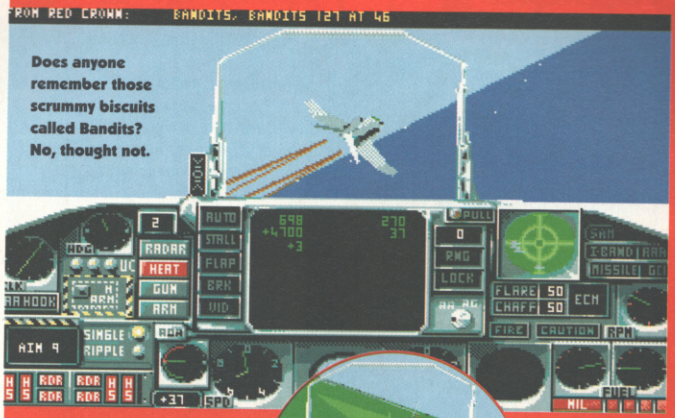
What a pity we've already done the joke about this being a real plumb job, it'd be great to use that one again.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Good, clean, honest fun. It may be the sort of thing you were playing in the mid '80s, but then high-res graphics wouldn't add much to this kind of game anyway.

79 PERCENT

FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER



Does anyone remember those scrummy biscuits called Bandits? No, thought not.

These things are more fun when you can shoot things on the ground too.

Publisher: Action 16 Supreme
Price: £14.99
Release: Out now

An acknowledged classic of the flight sim genre, *Flight Of The Intruder* was originally blasted out of the sky by the Mirrorsoft/Maxwell crash/dive a year or so ago. It's based upon a two year-old film that went down in non-release flames when the Gulf War reared its untimely head, and features a twenty year-old war scenario in which, unfortunately for them, the Americans fell to earth, painfully. Not looking too promising so far, so before anything else goes wrong, let's scramble...

We're flying a series of American missions over and around North Vietnam in 1972. People like being the Yanks in this kind of clinical, hi-tech escapade, perhaps it's something to do with a love of their fast food throwaway culture and a daily diet of Hollywood propaganda, though it's more likely because they usually get to fly the most modern, powerful, and sophisticated planes.

With Intruder we get a hint as to why the Americans notoriously failed to 'kick ass' in Vietnam. You see, this isn't just your everyday go-out-and-give-'em-hell flight sim, this time the intention is to follow the basic plot line of the script of the video of the film of the book of the real events. Your itchy combative hands are tied by niggling political considerations like, er, you can't bomb some pleadingly obvious enemy targets like missile launch pads because they're likely to have a few Soviet personnel on site, who, if eliminated, might cause the spark which turns the Cold War into a considerably warmer one. Thus you're restricted to specific bombing, attack, or defence missions from a carrier base involving a choice of two aircraft; the A-6 Intruder, or the F-4 Phantom.

There's slick presentation and smooth graphics as you'd expect, plus an almost overwhelming attention to detail. The list of options are simply immense. A rookie pilot CAN just catapult off the carrier and more or less run on auto, but the real game lies in the briefings, route planning, target choosing, arming etc. and etc. There are hundreds of options, thousands of decisions, millions of billions of trillions of zillions of things to do. All the trainspotter detail you could dream of is contained in a Jackie Collins-sized game manual *(A manual the size of Jackie Collins? Blimey! Is it the same shape, too? – Ed)* with essential facts, figures, and illustrations crammed into every nook and cranny of a mammoth 216 pages. Got a month to spare?

● *RONNIE RANDALL*

THE BOTTOM LINE

If you fancy yourself as a Wesley Crusher clone, (from Star Trek The Next Generation), get this. If you prefer to splutter around the skies at a relaxed pace, pressing a single fire button to engage your one weapon, go for an oldie like *Wings*.

75 PERCENT

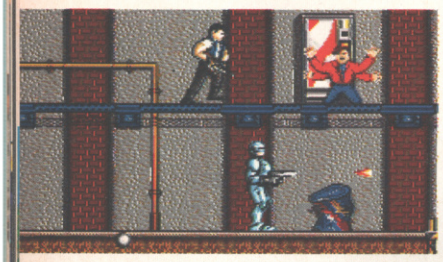
ROBOCOP 2

Publisher: The Hit Squad
Price: £7.99
Release: Out Now

There's a certain inevitability to some game tie-ins with certain films, while no one was holding their breath to see if an Amiga version of 'Driving Miss Daisy' was coming out, it was always on the cards that the RoboCop films would have computer equivalents. There's a good reason for this, whereas all that happens in DMD is that they grow old and die, practically all RoboCop ever does is fill hordes of street scum full of holes, and

that's the very essence of most games.

Robocop 2 strikes me as being eerily similar to the *Robocop* arcade game, in that it's a horizontally scrolling platform affair with plenty of potential for an obscenely high body count. The main man looks and moves like his film incarnation,



To protect himself from attack, Bill did his famous impression of a Hindu god.

walking in that same peculiar stiff-legged gait that owes as much to the tin man from Oz as it does to all of that body armour.

Robocop, or Rob as I'll call him from now on (we're that close) is after the killer drug Nuke, but his progress is hindered by all manner of bad guys armed with the kind of weaponry you only ever see in documentaries about Los Angeles kindergartens. The baddies come thick and fast, and have a certain degree of intelligence in that they'll fire up or down at you if you pass near. Obviously they're not that clever, or they'd have run as soon as they heard the phrase 'Come quietly or there'll be... trouble.' A few shots from Rob take out most people, who detonate in an impressive fireball, which is unexpected maybe, but lots of fun.

There's a small element of that 'protecting the innocent' garbage, but also no one to tell you off if you do kill them and besides, what were they doing hanging around with such slime anyway? Guns, death, destruction, mayhem, all packaged up with platforms and a filmy theme. Neat stuff, but it's not chess is it?

● *MARK WINSTANLEY*

THE BOTTOM LINE

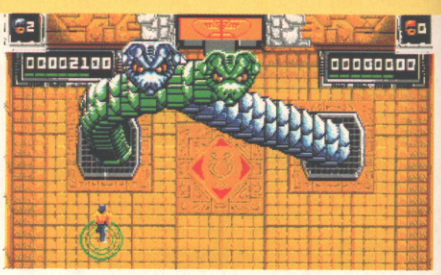
Thoroughly entertaining, but mindless, platform blaster. It's no better or worse than numerous others, but the price makes this one a tasty option for that spot of indiscriminate slaughter that everyone dabbles in occasionally.

66 PERCENT

SMASH TV

Publisher: Ocean
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now

If you wanted to put forward a case for excessive violence in games, *Smash TV* would be your man. It's quite simply the most brutal and sadistic game you're likely to come across. The plot (ha) revolves around the old sci-fi chestnut about a game show in the future where you have to navigate your way around three huge gaming arenas while being attacked on all sides by everything the game can throw at you. It starts with you in a room with hordes of emotionally disturbed thugs wielding baseball bats, and you proceed to tear them to shreds with a gun. Get the picture?



Monstrous end of level baddies. What a load of old cobras. ***(Get right out of here right now. – Ed)***

Smash TV started life as an arcade game. You can play this version with one or two joysticks, by far the best method being the latter as it enables you to use one joystick to move around and the other to direct your fire, so if you want to play a proper two player game you need a joystick adaptor and four of the things. The control system does let the game down a touch, but it works well enough if you stick two joysticks firmly down to your desk, and it's an incredibly exciting game once you get used to it. It's mayhem all the way, and you can pick up more powerful weapons which get progressively more ingenious in the cruelty they inflict on your attackers.

The baddies stream in at an ever increasing rate, and you have to avoid mines and wall mounted gunners while also trying to pick up prizes and money. There's a highly distasteful game show aspect to it all, with acts of extreme violence being accompanied by the typically insincere host proclaiming "You've just won an electric toaster". Its dubious morality is just kept in check by the tongue tucked firmly in its cheek, though I wouldn't like to defend it on a Channel 4 discussion programme. If you're not sensitive to an onslaught of total carnage, I strongly advise you to pick this bargain up right now.

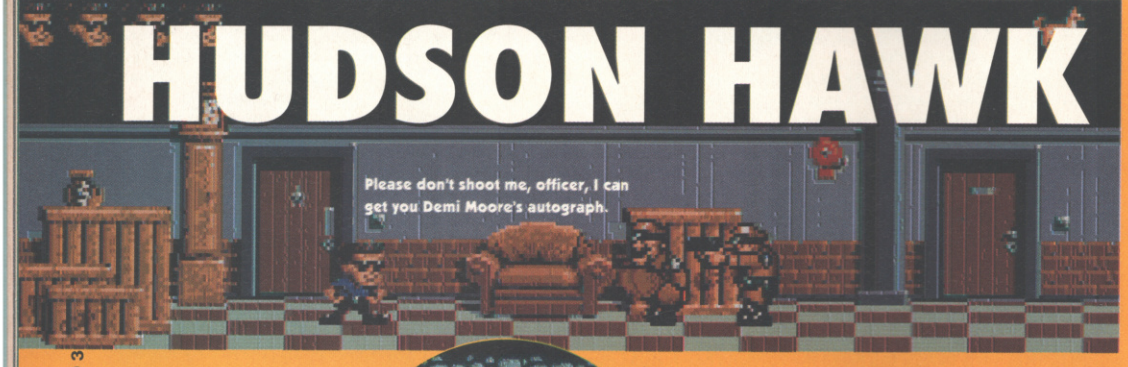
● *TIM TUCKER*

THE BOTTOM LINE

Fans of the coin-op might be disappointed by the control system, small screen and other inaccuracies, and you'll need two joysticks per player to get the best out of it. But once you've started you won't put it down, and shoot-'em-up lovers, or indeed anybody who likes their games full-on all the way, will love it. And it's only eight quid – a bargain.

79 PERCENT

HUDSON HAWK



Publisher: The Hit Squad
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now

There are two sides to every coin, they say. (At least, I hope they do, otherwise this next bit isn't going to make much sense.)

The 'heads', as far as *Hudson Hawk* is concerned, is the care that's gone into putting it together. The graphics are wonderfully slick, with brilliantly detailed sprites and some great cartoon-style animation. It's big, too, with lots of variety between levels (though, thankfully, it doesn't fall into the old film licence trap of disintegrating into lots of little sub-games).

But then there's the 'tails' – the control system. I think I can safely say that *Hudson Hawk*'s controls are the most annoying thing I've encountered for at least three weeks. The main problem is the ridiculous amount of inertia that accompanies everything Hudson does.

It's always the same, isn't it? There you are, out for a stroll, and some fool puts flaming cauldrons in your way.

Stuart spent about a page discussing this in issue 7, but the gist of it was that Hudson feels like he's on rollerskates the whole time, and what starts out as a simple leap from one platform to another generally turns into a battle to prevent him from overshooting and plummeting to his death. The other biggie is the weapons system. (Hudson can either punch baddies or throw exploding balls at them.) Of the fire button, the manual says "Press slowly to throw ball, press quickly to punch". Ah ha ha ha.

There are smaller things, too, like the way it's impossible to get Hudson to perform a simple vertical jump. It's either a jump to the left, or a jump to the right *(But it's the pelvic thrusts that really drive you insa-a-a-a-a-ane. – Ed)*, or a jump to the left followed by a desperate attempt to get him to turn round in mid-air, generally ending in disaster.

But oddly, despite the game's best efforts to persuade me to hurl it from the window as hard as I possibly could, it kept drawing me back, and I kept getting slightly further each time. It makes a terrific budget game, too – if ever a game was written with a cheapie re-release in mind, this is it.

● *JONATHAN DAVIES*

THE BOTTOM LINE

A really tough game but, sadly, in all the wrong ways. Even so, as a budget release, it's quite a bargain.

71 PERCENT

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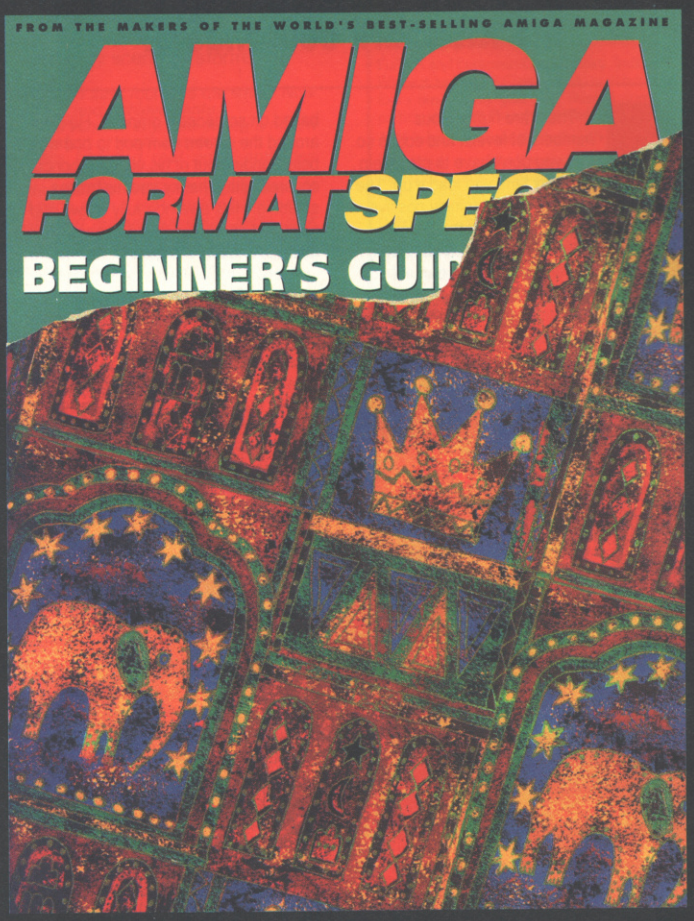

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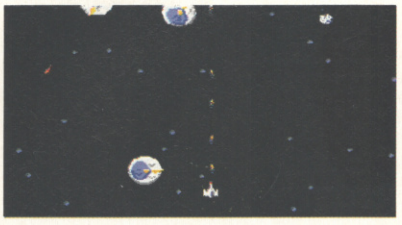
PD

Not everything that's cheap is necessarily nasty, but a lot of it is. Dave Golder gives the latest public domain releases the Watchdog consumer test-type treatment and separates the potential killers from the Kitemark contenders.



Oh no, this is those games that gives PD a good name. Whatever next?

TRANSPLANT

ASI PD (not 600/1200 compatible)

What's in a name, eh? This game would be pretty darned good whatever it was called. As it is it's called *Transplant*, and I haven't got the foggiest why.

It's an *Asteroids*-type game with an excellent twist (almost literally) – as opposed to the ship rotating, the background does all the whizzing about. It's a bit disorientating at first, but once you get used to it, the sensation of motion is excellent.

Besides the simple but effective graphics, wonderful motion picture-type music and superb use of sound effects (the explosions sound different depending on what you blow up) there are a couple of other nice touches. As opposed to pick-ups for improved shields, firepower, lives, etc, you earn credits which you can then spend on buying these things. *(It's not THAT innovative. – Ed)* And the two-player mode is excellent fun.

There are humungous numbers of levels, and codes so that you don't have to play them all every time you load it up. The controls are pleasingly positive which, along with the decent collision detection, means that you can't blame the game if you get blown up. The only real problem is that after a while it does get a little samey, since there isn't enough variation in the alien attackers.

VERDICT: Decent blast-'em-up action with an effective twist that makes it fun for a while at least.

Rating: ★★★★

BALDY

ASI PD (Not 6/1200 compatible)

Old bald geezers are always good for a bit of a laugh, if nothing else.

At last! It's here. The Elton John sim. No? *(No, and you can pay your own legal expenses when he sues you. – Ed)* Ah well, perhaps one day.

The actual star of *Baldy* seems to be based on someone's grandad. He leaps around the screen from pod to pod with his belly hanging out of his vest, his bonce covered with a hanky and his braces straining. He's a wonderfully drawn and animated sprite, but, to be honest, there's not much else to the game.

He has to collect a certain number of computer disks from each level and does this by jumping on about on a number of platforms. He can't jump vertically and has to use transporter platforms to teleport to lower or higher platforms. Oh, and he has to bear the backache and crouch down to avoid flying thingies occasionally. And that's about it.

VERDICT: Looks great, and is a fairly amusing puzzler, but its life expectancy is less than its hero's.

Rating: ★★★

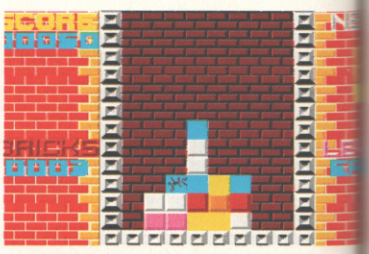
KLAKTRIS

Telescan

Yep another cross between *Tetris* and *Columns*. This one is dead colourful, has some nifty animation and is as dull a Chris Rea album filler. 'Slow' is not the word for it, but since they haven't invented a word for it yet, 'slow' will have to do.

VERDICT: Don't be fooled by the looks. It's tedious.

Rating: ★



***Klaktris*, on the other hand, makes you wonder why they bothered.**

NIRVANA

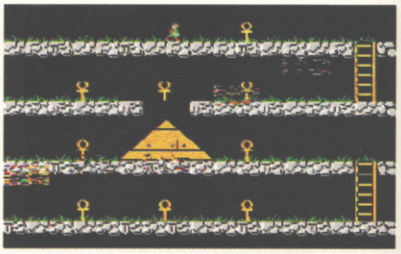
The Mobius Strip

Shame about this one. It looks like it could have been really good. A blobby character moves around collecting various new age-type things (Ankhs, sun symbols, other hippy nonsense) and avoiding nasties. It has a decent balance of puzzling, timing and dexterity, a healthy dose of humour and responsive controls.

Unfortunately, on the A6/1200 it flickered like mad while on the A500 the excellently-animated sprites were messy blobs. It's playable, but it'd be best to wait for version two.

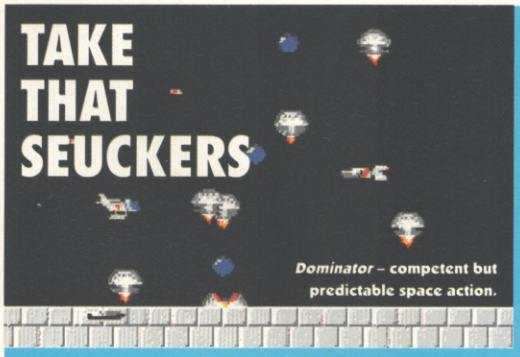
VERDICT: Flawed classic... er make that crippled okayish sort of thing.

Rating: ★★★



Platform fun with a few nice visual touches in *Nirvana*. Has anyone seen my Kaftan?

TAKE THAT SEUCKERS



***Dominator* – competent but predictable space action.**

Is there a demand for *SEUCK* (*Shoot-'Em-Up Construction Kit*) games? There are tons released, but does anybody buy them? You can spot a *SEUCK* game a mile off – the regular attack patterns of the enemy, the rotten collision detection, the relentless, one-speed scrolling,etc. It's difficult to come up with anything really impressive with *SEUCK* – most of the stuff is competent but so predictable.

Take this month's duo for example. *Dominator* from CID is a sideways scrolling shoot-'em-up, that looks great – it even features a primitive attempt at parallax scrolling (don't get too excited). Set in deep space, there are loads of alien attack ships and, um not a lot more (except a plot explanation that makes Dune look like the Mr Men). It also has that annoying shooting system where you blast in the direction you last moved your joystick. (Rating: ★★★)

In *Skyflyer* (dreadful name) you always shoot upwards – lucky, then, that this is a vertically-scrolling game. This one is a World War 2 affair with you controlling a fighter plane. The enemy this time are represented by enemy planes. tanks and other military type stuff. There are even some pick-ups for all the usual things, like bonus points and extra lives. With colourful graphics and nifty sound effects, this is the more interesting of the two *SEUCK*ed games. (Rating: ★★★).

More fun than many, and at least it's not set in space.

Addresses: TELESCAN , Handsworth Road, Blackpool ☎ Blackpool 22296. ● CID, 3 Chapel Street, Higham, Burnley, Lancs BB12 9H6 ● THE MOBIUS STRIP, PO Box 729, Glasgow G42 9NG

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* *First ever simulation capable of replaying REAL matches (ex: the Leeds- Rangers clash in the European Cup)*
* *First ever Scottish only simulation: FT2 Scotland now available separately.*

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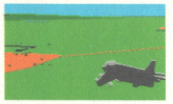
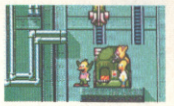
POINTS OF VIEW

It takes, as they say, all sorts to make a world. It's just a pity it takes people like these AP reviewers...

	THE CHAOS ENGINE	LIONHEART	 HARRIER	STREET FIGHTER II	NICK FALDO	 KRUSTY'S FUN HOUSE	HISTORY LINE	ALIEN^3	DARK SEED
MARK RAMSHAW	Flippin' marvellous ★★★★★	Wow, what a breakthrough ★★★★★	Where's the frame update? ★★	Mindless beat-'em-up-tastic! ★★★★	Join this club, kids ★★★★	A bit too itchy and scratchy ★★★	Eek! A sexy wargame ★★★★	Better than the movie ★★★★	Rates high on the Giger counter ★★★★
STUART CAMPBELL	Wow, what a breakthrough ★★★★★	Ooh, it's so pretty, missus ★★★★	Haven't played it	Swipe me, it's quite good! ★★★★	Stupidly expensive but great ★★★★	Look, rats are nice, okay? ★★★	Haven't played it	Action-packed slime-blasting ★★★★	Haven't played it
GARY PENN	S'all right, I s'pose ★★★	Haven't played it	Not my cup of bleedin' cocoa	Haven't played it	Very smart stuff ★★★	It's all right – neat ★★★	Haven't played it	Baldy good fun ★★★★	Haven't played it
TIM NORRIS	H G Wells with violence – fab! ★★★★★	Very sexy-looking and a good game ★★★★	Haven't got an A1200 ★	Don't believe the hype ★★★★	I really like this a lot, actually ★★★★★	Rat-tastic! ★★★★	Haven't played it	Ordinary platformy stuff ★★★	Scary fun ★★★★
MARK WINSTANLEY	Worthy of all the hype ★★★★★	Fabulous graphics, alright game ★★★	Dull. Next! ★★	Toned-down but still alright ★★★	Alright if you like golf games ★★★	Haven't played it	Haven't played it	Guns, platforms, aliens – I like it! ★★★★	The best graphic adventure yet ★★★★★
TIM TUCKER	Great stuff ★★★★	Good slash-'em-up but not great ★★★	Another dull flight sim ★★	Better than expected ★★★★	Best golf game around ★★★★★	Haven't played it	Haven't played it	Looks and feels like the films ★★★★	Haven't played it

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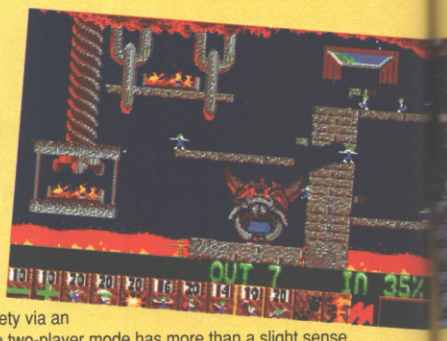
A CLONE AG

Every now and again a game comes out that gives you that funny déjà vu feeling. But when two games look like a pair of long-lost twins, is it just sheer coincidence or is there something more sinister going on? We decided that it was time a few of the guilty parties were brought to justice, so we set up our own little kangaroo court to sort out the sinners from the sinned-against. Presiding over the proceedings in his funny wig (or is his hair supposed to be like that?), Judge Stuart Campbell.

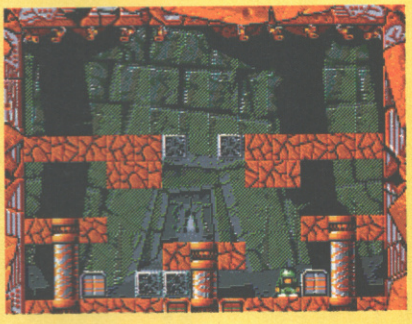
LEMMINGS
(Psygnosis)

TRODDLERS
(Storm)



The case for the prosecution: Well, just look at it... Millions of little furry characters trogging around, none of them influenceable by you, leaving you to manipulate their environment to guide them to safety via an exit on each level. The combative two-player mode has more than a slight sense of déjà vu about it, too.

The case for the defence: It's not just *Lemmings* – it's a bit of a copy of *Solomon's Key* as well. To be fair, the biggest similarity between *Lemmings* and *Troddlers* is a pretty superficial one – the dozens of tiny sprites. The basic 'indirect control' gameplay is in the same kind of vein too, but hey – aren't there only about nine different game styles in the world anyway?

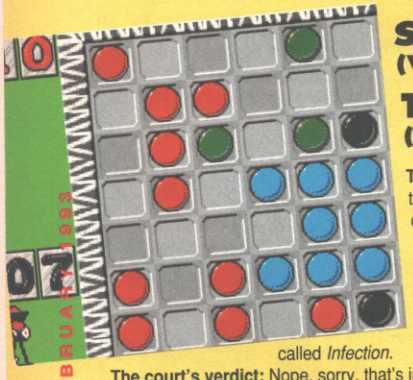


The court's verdict: A long deliberation for the jury on this one, but after much thought and argument the mix of game styles and varied influences brings *Troddlers* a 'Not Guilty'.

Cute characters, rocky backgrounds. It's a good job the gameplay's different.

SPOT
(Virgin)

THE BALL GAME
(Electronic Zoo)



The case for the prosecution: It's exactly the same abstract board game, but with a bit of isometric 3D perspective thrown in to make it look a bit prettier.

The case for the defence: It's hardly fair to point the finger at *The Ball Game* when *Spot* itself is a complete steal of an unreleased earlier game (also from Virgin) called *Infection*.

The court's verdict: Nope, sorry, that's just not good enough. Two wrongs don't make a right, after all. And if Virgin can't nick an idea from themselves, who can? It's a bit of a mystery why Virgin didn't kick up a bit of a fuss about this one, because there's barely a single distinction between the two games except in the visual department. Whatever, that's not going to stop the court delivering a hefty sentence to go with a unanimous 'Guilty'. Send 'em down!

We could get a great gag in here like: *Spot The Ball Game*. We shan't, though.

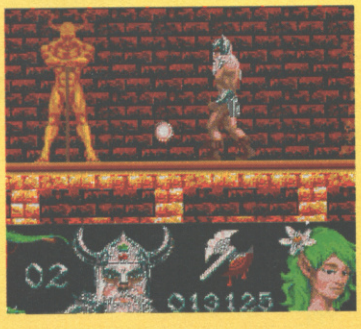
GODS
(Renegade)

DELIVERANCE
(21st Century)

The case for the prosecution: M'lud, I put it to you that *Deliverance* is basically identical to *Gods*, except with more colours used than just blue, and with most of the complicated clever stuff taken out. Play these two games on a black and white TV and you'd be hard pushed to tell them apart.

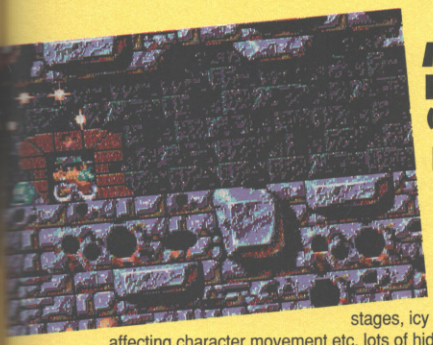
The case for the defence: Come on, a platform game with a big butch hero running around slaughtering bad guys with axes is hardly the most original idea in the history of the world, is it? People have been writing games like this for years – trying to claim design credit for them's a bit rich.

The court's verdict: Despite being locked in an expensive hotel for several nights, the jury were unable to reach a majority decision. Some jurors pointed out the obvious visual and stylistic similarities, but others claimed that the more straightforward, fast and violent style made for more of an arcade game. Reluctantly, therefore, the court has to pass a verdict of 'Not Proven'.



No one can really claim that any platformy slasher is original.

AIN, OR...?

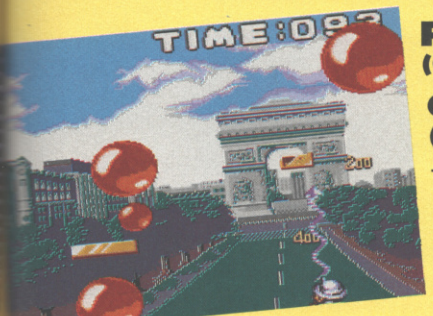


MAGIC POCKETS
(Renegade)

FIRE & ICE
(Renegade)

The case for the prosecution: *Magic Pockets* – cute platform and zapping game with lovable hero, five big levels with multiple stages, icy world and underwater sections affecting character movement etc, lots of hidden secrets, lots and lots of blue. *Fire & Ice* – cute platform and zapping game with lovable hero, five big levels with multiple stages, icy world and underwater sections affecting character movement etc, lots of hidden secrets, lots and lots of blue. Separated at birth or what?
The case for the defence: Yeah, but it's 10 times better, isn't it?
The court's verdict: Quite a clear-cut case, but since in this case the crime appears to have resulted in an actual improvement in the victim's state, we'll let the accused off with a conditional discharge.

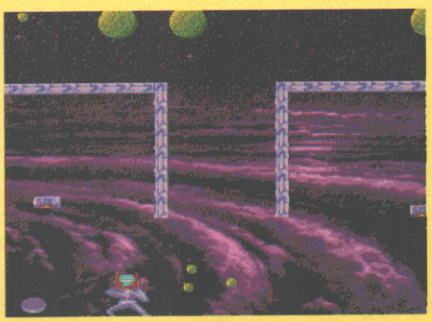
Since Cool Coyote is so lovely and the game is so great, we'll let 'em off.



PANG
(Ocean)

OOPS UP
(Demonware)

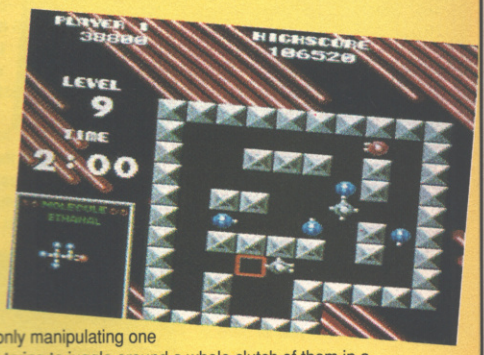
The case for the prosecution: What we have here, members of the jury, is surely the most blatant case of game-design 'tribute'. *Pang* was one of the most original arcade games of the last few years (notwithstanding the Spectrum original, *Bubble Buster*, which was designed by the same people and so doesn't count as having been nicked), and this complete rewrite with some funky music slapped on top is simply barefaced copying of the first order.
The case for the defence: Er...um...amazing coincidence?
The court's verdict: Oh dear oh dear. We had hoped not to be seeing you again so soon, but it would appear we were wrong to give you the benefit of the doubt. In the face of this horrific and blatant crime, we shall correct that mistake now. Lock 'em up and throw away the key.



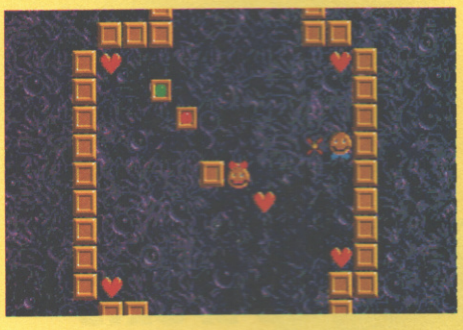
Not only was *Oops Up* a rip-off, it didn't have the really nice backgrounds.

ATOMIX
(Thalion)

THE POWER
(Demonware)



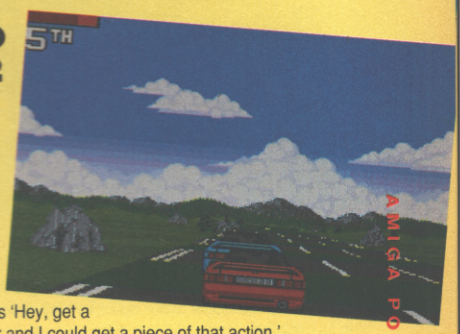
The case for the prosecution: Big mazes, sliding blocks which only stop when they hit walls or obstacles, lots of abstract spatial manipulation to get your head round... Seen this somewhere before, haven't we?
The case for the defence: You're only manipulating one character in a big maze, rather than trying to juggle around a whole clutch of them in a more enclosed space, which makes *The Power* more of an arcadey experience in contrast to *Atomix*'s sophisticated update of the old sliding-block puzzles.
The court's verdict: Hmm... a bit dubious, especially since later levels of *The Power* introduce many new elements which bring it closer to *Atomix*'s puzzle bias, but for a first offender the court can show a degree of leniency. Six months probation, and keep your nose clean, young man.



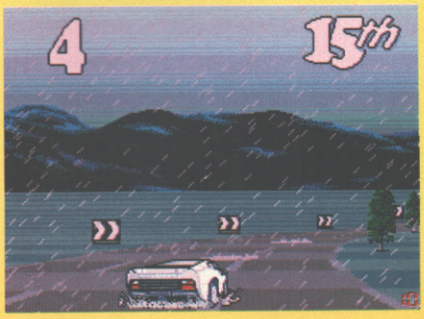
***The Power*. It's a bit like *Atomix*, really, isn't it?**

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE 2
(Gremlin)

JAGUAR XJ220
(Core)



The case for the prosecution: Hugely successful series of games sells quicker than publisher can duplicate copies. Other publisher thinks 'Hey, get a big-name licence, add a track designer and I could get a piece of that action.'
The case for the defence: The *Lotus* games were excellent, certainly, but there was still plenty of room for improvement, such as the addition of a course designer. *Jaguar* is less of an arcade racer than the *Lotus*es, having more of a strategic rallying feel in the way you have to win money to repair the damage to your car and to ferry it around the world.
The court's verdict: That's all very well, but in the end it was *Lotus 2* with most of the cars taken out. A resounding 'Guilty' from the majority, with Jonathan Davies still dissenting.



***Jaguar*'s okay, but what's the point of a racing game with no one to race against?**

GOLDEN AXE
(Virgin)

MOTORHEAD
(Virgin)

The case for the prosecution: Chunky cartoon graphics and primary colours bunged on top of an old scrolling beat-'em-up do not a new game make, especially if you even keep the control and power-up systems exactly the same as they were before.

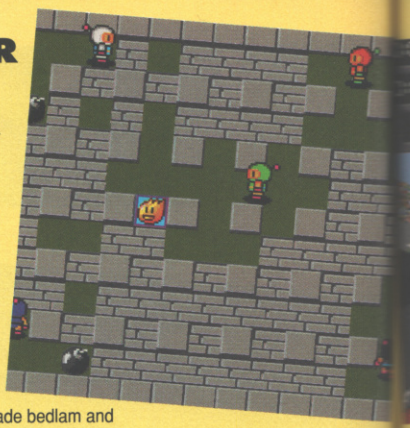
The case for the defence: Your average *Motorhead* fan's not going to notice any of that though, is he?

The court's verdict: An open and shut case of tealeafery, but the court acquits the game on the grounds that it turns a really tedious hackneyed orc-slashing affair into a bit of a tongue-in-cheek rock'n'roll larf, guv'nor.

It's pretty easy to spot the similarities, but isn't it more fun to beat up Country & Western stars with a guitar than to hack away at fantasy characters with a sword? We think so, so *Motorhead* gets away with a light ticking-off and a pat on the head.

DYNA BLASTER
(Ubi Soft)

BUG BOMBER
(Kingsoft)



The case for the prosecution: Four little guys running around a block maze destroying walls, collecting power-ups and trying to kill each other? Bang to rights on this one, surely?

The case for the defence: There's actually a lot more to *Bug Bomber* than there is in the Ubi Soft title. Mixing the four-player bombing mayhem with the ancient Spectrum game *Chaos* lifts it away from pure arcade bedlam and into the realms of something considerably more cerebral.

The court's verdict: This is the way cloning should operate – taking the best elements from classic games and mixing them together to produce something that's got all the top features of its parents, but a unique feel all of its own on top. Perhaps still a little Guilty, but with extreme mitigating circumstances, so the defendant is free to go.

***Bug Bomber* has a little more of a strategy element to it than *Dyna Blaster*, but it's still not quite the same frantic fun as a four-player game.**

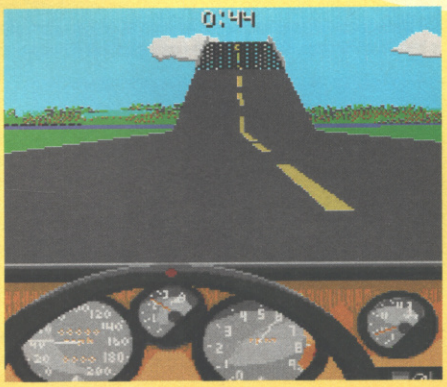
HARD DRIVIN'
(Domark)

4D SPORTS DRIVING
(Mindscape)

The case for the prosecution: Same graphics, same gameplay, most of the same stunts to do as well.

The case for the defence: Ah, now, this is obviously completely different at heart, because it's based on hovercraft instead of cars. After all, cars have wheels.

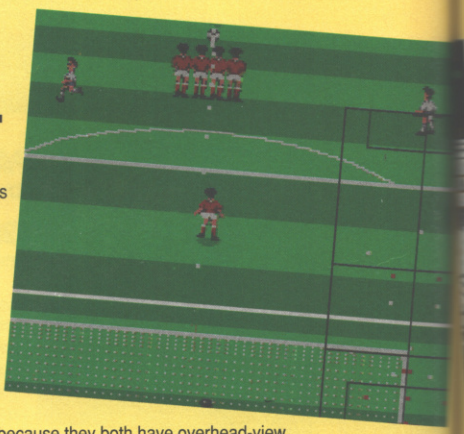
The court's verdict: Only *Oops Up* challenges this for sheer brass-necked cheek, and at least that had some funky music by way of compensation to make it worth owning in its own right. You're nicked, sonny.



There really is no defence. They look the same, they play the same, they came in boxes made of the same material, they were both sold on 3.5 inch disks, they... *(You're not being entirely sensible now, are you? It would be better for everyone concerned if you restricted yourself to comments about the games. – Ed)*

STRIKER
(Rage)

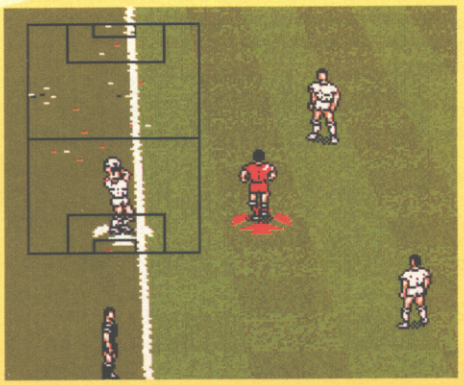
LIVERPOOL
(Grandslam)



The case for the prosecution: Two games appear within weeks of each other, both using a previously-unheard of second-person 3D perspective, both with much the same control system and most of the same features.

The case for the defence: How different CAN you make a couple of football games? After all, nobody says *Sensible Soccer*'s the same as *Gazza 2* because they both have overhead-view perspective, do they?

The court's verdict: It's all a bit suspect, frankly, but the evidence of the two release dates does seem to suggest that they were just too close together for anything untoward to have been going on. Reluctantly, we'll let this one go.



There's not really much you can do with a football game, so there are bound to be some similarities.

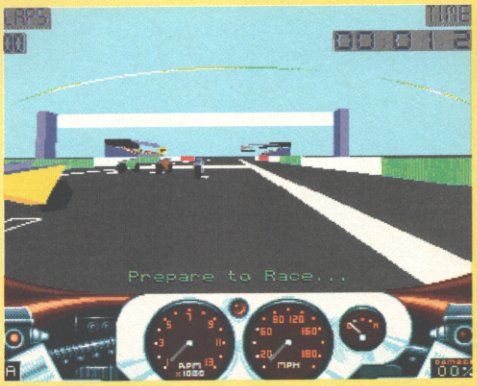
TEAM SUZUKI
(Gremlin)

RED ZONE
(Psygnosis)

The case for the prosecution: Well, could YOU tell them apart on a dark night? *Red Zone* had about 18 months to study *Team Suzuki*, isolate its flaws, take inspiration from other, more successful, racing games and produce something really stunning. So why on Earth did it turn out exactly the same, except not quite as good?

The case for the defence: Things were made to look worse than they really were by the release of *Team Suzuki* on budget at almost the same time as *Red Zone* came out. And, er, that's it, really.

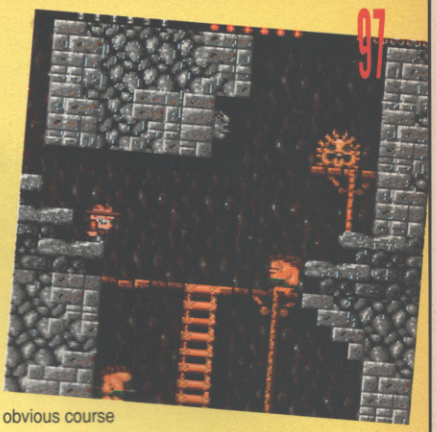
The court's verdict: *No Second Prize* proves that all polygon-based motorbike racers don't have to be the same, so there's really no excuse for this kind of thing. A unanimous 'Guilty' from the jury.



***Red Zone* was filmed in fabulous 3D Jerk-O-Vision.**

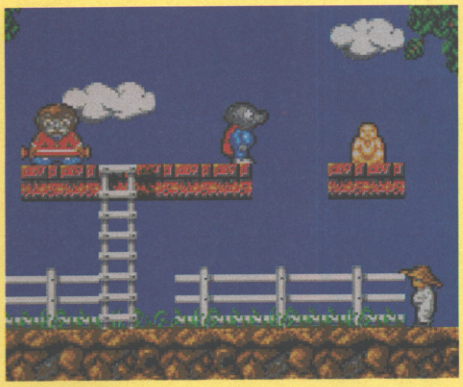
RICK DANGEROUS
(MicroProse)

IMPOSSAMOLE
(Gremlin)



The case for the prosecution: Core Design write a couple of *Rick Dangerous* titles for MicroProse, simple 8-bit-esque platform games with chunky graphics and frustrating but addictive learn-from-experience gameplay, which prove immensely popular. Gremlin commission Core to write a new game for their veteran character Monty Mole, star of several old platform games. There's a very obvious course of action here, isn't there?

The case for the defence: Hey, if you've got a winning formula, why muck around with it? We did change the graphics after all, what more do you want?



The court's verdict: Nope, sorry, that's just not good enough. Which, coincidentally, is what almost everyone who bought *Impossamole* said when they got home and loaded it up. A clone too far, and a definite 'Guilty', even if they were only stealing from themselves.

Moles, mandarins and, er, some other things beginning with 'm'.

NARC
(Ocean)

CRIME WAVE
(US Gold)

The case for the prosecution: Mean city streets, drug pushers everywhere, horizontal scrolling, lots of things exploding into a million little bits, only you can clean up the ghetto, etc etc. Didn't you kill my brother?

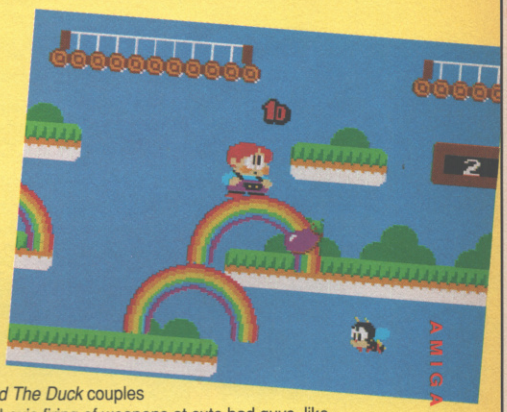
The case for the defence: Let's face it, there's nothing to choose between the games at all, but *Crime Wave* does have some quite nice digitised video sequences of the heroine tied to a chair. *(Oi! – Ed)*

The court's verdict: You'd think that if someone was going to copy a game that turned out to be completely crap, they'd at least take the opportunity to tidy up a few of the flaws. *Crime Wave* is actually worse in most respects than the original, and for that it gets 20 years without remission.

Another case of the bland leading the bland. *Crime Wave* isn't even saved by the gore.

RAINBOW ISLANDS
(Ocean)

EDD THE DUCK
(Zeppelin)



The case for the prosecution: *Edd The Duck* uses cartoon graphics in primary colours, like *Rainbow Islands*. *Edd The Duck* is a vertically-scrolling platform game where the basic object is simply to get to the top of the screen, like *Rainbow Islands*. *Edd The Duck* couples vertical movement with horizontal-axis firing of weapons at cute bad guys, like *Rainbow Islands*. *Edd The Duck* looks almost exactly, like *Rainbow Islands*.

The case for the defence: *Edd The Duck* is unlike *Rainbow Islands* in one very important respect. *Edd The Duck* is utterly crap.

The court's verdict: If you're going to rip off a great game, you might as well do it properly. This misses the point by such a colossal distance that we can only assume insanity to be the cause. We sentence it to be detained in a secure hospital at Her Majesty's Pleasure.

Andy Crane is a very pleasant chap. But indirectly this is his fault.

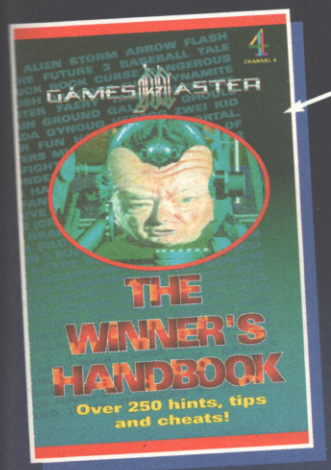
THE GREATEST SHOW ON TV...

Inside the first issue you'll find an ENORMOUS and thoroughly splendid double-sided *Desert Strike* poster-calendar. Guaranteed to make even the grimiest bedroom/office/doctor's waiting room a more exciting and informative place to be, it boasts not one but TWO excellent pieces of chopper-related artwork for your edification (or something).

Along with all the news, reviews, previews, celebrity challenges, giant competitions and a particularly diabolical quiz, each issue will sport a truly awesome tips section hosted by the oracle of all gaming knowledge, the GamesMaster himself.

...IS NOW ON PAPER!

Maximum information with minimum fuss. Each month, the newest games for all the major formats will be reviewed by our merciless team, including a host of guest reviewers from the show. More grab-maps, more beginner's tips and more facts.



And there's also a 100- page tips book with codes, cheats and hints for more than 250 red-hot games! Use of this handy volume will transform even the most inept gamer into a victorious software gladiator! It's not called The Winner's Handbook for nothing.

GamesMaster Magazine is an all-new games guide from Future Publishing. We've teamed up with the people behind the GamesMaster TV show to produce the smartest, liveliest and most informative reading experience ever! If you like the TV show, you'll love the mag, because each issue will give you a month's worth of concentrated GamesMaster excitement!

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We'll be reporting on both official and grey import releases, and giving a full release schedule for the whole of 1993. GamesMaster: soon you'll be able to hold it in your hand...

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DO THE write THING

Themes are Good Things. We like things to have a theme. This month's theme in Do The Write Thing: letters that Mark W typed in and then threw away without noting where the senders came from. You just can't get the staff these days...

● Address your letters to: AMIGA POWER, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

'I AM A REGULAR'

Dear AMIGA POWER,
I am a regular reader of AMIGA POWER but the last three issues I have not got my demos. I have complained to the newsagents but they don't do anything so I am writing to you.
Yours faithfully, Tom Rendall, Bideford

Gee, thanks. Bit puzzled here, Tom. Why are you buying copies of the mag which don't have the disks on? Are you daft or something? Ask your newsagent for the disk (some of them remove them to stop them being nicked) and if he/she won't give it to you with the mag, then buy your mag from somewhere else. AMIGA POWER is incomplete without its disk and people shouldn't be selling it without it. It really is that simple.

'THE WORD'

Dear AMIGA POWER
I am a 26 year old mother of two small children and I own an Amiga A500. I subscribe to your magazine and have done so since it came out, and I have a few points I would like to mention.

Firstly the word 'crap'. I don't like it and don't think that it should be printed. It would be better to use the word 'rubbish'. I know it's not swearing, but if my children ever used that word then I would have a go at them. On asking around friends, the opinion is that it's offensive and as your magazine is read by all ages of children, I honestly don't think it should be used.

Secondly, when I subscribed I received the game *Mega lo Mania*. This game is brilliant, and is totally addictive. I have now completed the game with three of the four players and have just started on the fourth player. When will *Mega lo Mania 2* be released? I don't think I'll be able to stand the withdrawal symptoms if it takes too long.

Lastly, more PD games on the coverdisk if possible please. When not playing *Mega lo Mania*, I play *Tiles* or *Super Twintris*, both of which I wouldn't have known existed if it hadn't been for your magazine.
Keep up the good work,
Mandi, Gt. Yarmouth

PS If I hadn't subscribed and got *Mega lo Mania* free, I couldn't have afforded to buy it (cost of nappies, etc.) so it really is worth subscribing.

I'm very sorry that you're upset by 'crap', Mandi, but I do think you're being wildly over-sensitive. We covered the 'language' topic pretty extensively last month, I think, and 'crap' is just about the only decent word we've got left to express strong distaste for something. Let's face it, Mandi, 'rubbish' just doesn't cut the mustard. Go back and read, for example, the Joe And Mac *review this issue. 'Honestly, what a pile of rubbish' isn't quite the same, now is it? If you don't want your children to use expressive language, you're their parent – do something about it. A good talking to, and they'll stop saying 'crap' pretty quickly, we'd guess.*

'ABOUT MINUS TEN'

Dear AMIGA POWER,
I HATE CAR DRIVERS!
Y'know the ones. People who wash their cars when it's about minus ten, so the water freezes before it's even hit the deck, and then laugh at me sliding gracefully past on my motorbike straight through the neighbours fence. Or the prats who pull out in front of you (you know who you are) and giggle hysterically as you cartwheel over their bonnet, and especially the ones who nicked my bike!

And so I lie here in my sickbed spouting all this paranoiac drivel to you. My trusty Amiga lies by my side, without (sniff) a decent game to chew on while in front of me lies AP's review of *No Second Prize*. Come on lads, gissa game.

Still, I suppose I'm better off than most (boy, those consoles are crap!) I honestly can't see what Amiga owners are worried about. Mega Drive games have crap sound, poor graphics and generally are about as deep as a puddle (Controls feel dodgy too). *Street Fighter II* is brilliant on the SNES, but it's about the only game that you don't get bored of rapidly. *Mario* is the crappiest bit of crappy old crap I've ever seen. Give me *Harlequin* any day.

There, I've said it. The Amiga's got a bright future. Just watch all the console owners flock to the 32 bit A1200 and smirk to yourself "What the hell kept ya?"
Yours Stu 'banging headache and sore bloody leg' Laxton, Stalybridge

'A COUPLE OF NEW IDEAS'

Dear AMIGA POWER
You asked for constructive criticism, and as the greasy, acne-infested assistant at my local hamburger chain says 'you got it!' Actually it's not criticism, just a couple of new ideas for competitions.

Why not every issue, attach to just ten or so copies a coverdisk saying that these people have won a prize.

Considering that a lot of these cover disks will get sent back to the distributor without being sold, it wouldn't be expensive for the magazine, especially if the prize was just an AP T-shirt.

Why don't you print half a dozen of your reviews without the names of the reviewers and than have a competition where the reader has to guess who's written what review simply by reading it and looking at the Bottom Line. As a regular reader I can now distinguish between the various writing styles of the AP staff. Obviously the Ed wouldn't tell the reviewers which issue this was to be done so that they didn't write any differently from normal.

Thought these might be of some use.
Stuart Lee, Northumberland

PS Is that chap Ronnie Randall moonlighting as Steve MacDonald from Coronation Street?

NAFF JOYSTICK winner

'I DO NOT OWN AN AMIGA'

Dear AMIGA POWER,
You want interesting letters? I DO NOT OWN AN AMIGA! Good start eh? I'm getting one soon though. (Anyone want to buy a genuine antique Atari doorstop?)

To ready myself for this wonderful occasion I have ploughed through the Amiga Format Software Special (very good too) as well as your October issue, checking out the games listings and ratings. I was pleased to find most of my old favourites from the ST were available on the Amiga. (NB I have no problem with snide comments about other formats, I gave that up when the old Speccy vs. C64 wars were on, let's leave that sort of thing to the console users.)

To the point. Throughout my quest into Amiga software as a guideline to games in general, one topic just kept on popping up. It's an old cookie I know, but it's worth opening up the biscuit barrel one more time:

PLAYABILITY. Okay, you've got your different genres and each to his own etc, but beyond *Speedball 2* and *Turbo Challenge* you've only got a short list of maybe 20 or so good games.

What are software people doing for a living? Are the Bitmaps the only people even trying to produce decent, playable games?

I just can't believe it. What a wonderful box of tricks you've got at your disposal, it knocks spots off all similarly priced formats.

Okay, so you're happy, your bills are getting paid on time, you've paid off the loan on your new car but for Amiga's sake pull your finger out will you.
Want some advice? Okay, this is for free.
1. Don't go anywhere near arcade conversions of the *Op. Wolf* variety.
2. Film tie-ins: Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha.
3. ASK games players what they want. *Sensible Soccer* is brilliant if you want to play football, know what I mean? *(Er, not really. – Ed)*
4. 'Genre' is not same thing as changing the main sprite from another game, leaving the rest intact and selling it as if it's something new.
5. Have the word PLAYABILITY tattooed onto your forehead (In reverse). Look it up in the dictionary first.
6. Forget 10,000 amazing levels, forget 4,096 brilliant colours, forget superb 8 level parallax scrolling, forget 16 channel CD quality sound, forget 'music by Michael Jackson'.
7. PLAYABILITY, PLAYABILITY, PLAYABILITY, PLAYABILITY, PLAYABILITY, PLAYABILITY, PLAYABILITY, PLAYABILITY, PLAYABILITY, PLAYABILITY.
8. Number 8 is far too rude for your magazine.
Numbers 9 and 10: See number 7.

Maybe I'm being unfair, a bit over the top. It's your 25 quid, if you're happy then that's great, but software publishing is done for you, not for Mr Happy with his Vauxhall Nova. *(What? – Ed)*
Yours a bit annoyed really, Gareth Forster

Thanks, Stu. We liked the guessing the reviewer from the style idea, but we had another one. What we fancied was trying to write in each other's styles. We'll let you know what happens with that one.

'WAGGA WAGGA'

Dear AMIGA POWER,
I got my Amiga A500 (bless its little memory chips) about three months ago and since then I've been an avid reader of your magazine. My neighbour though, has had his Amiga for about three years, and since then has built up quite a collection of computer mags, including yours, and has very kindly passed them on to me, which I keep on a shelf with mine. Which brings me to the reason I wrote: to try and purchase back issues from one to fifteen of your fab mag (which I'll be buying every month from now on). I know that there's a back issue order form in each issue, but nowhere does it state whether:
1. Overseas readers can purchase them.
2. Whether you will take a Euro Cheque.
3. How much it would cost including postage and packing, etc. in pounds, sterling.

I hope you'll reply as I'd love to have a complete collection of your magazine.
Yours sincerely, Damian Shoemark, Wagga Wagga, Australia

A jolly good point, Damian. We contacted our Mail Order people and they told us that back issues will cost you (and any other overseas types) £5.50 Sterling each and that you can pay by Euro Cheque, International Money Order or Credit Card. We've made a note on the back issues page as well, so thanks for bringing that to our attention. And thanks for being from Wagga Wagga too, we love that name.

'SHAMANISTIC LEMMINGS'

Dear AMIGA POWER
I like Shamanistic lemmings, me.
Me, I like Shamanistic lemmings.
I always say it boosts a lemmings credibility no end if he adds a few shamanistic tendencies to his personality. The more the better in most cases.
But I digress, I like Shamanistic lemmings, me.
Me, I like Shamanistic lemmings.
Yours sincerely, 12 Rainbow Trout
PS I'm a shamanistic lemming, me.
Me, I'm a Shamanistic lemming.

'NONE OF THIS RUBS OFF'

Dear AMIGA POWER,
I am writing to complain about the boys at Sensible Software. Over the past few months they have systematically destroyed the image that has been built up around the software industry.

Do they not realise that the software industry is there to rip off its customers with over-priced hype?

They started by producing the best football game in history, although admittedly cashing in on the hype surrounding the European championships. When letters poured in suggesting ways in which the game could be improved, instead of binning them, they re-wrote an updated version of this classic.

If this wasn't bad enough they then missed the opportunity of cashing in on their success. They could have released the new version as a full blown sequel and charged £30, or it could have been released as a data disk for £15.

What do we get? An all new improved game for just £3.95.
I just hope and pray that none of this outrageous behaviour rubs off onto any of those other software houses.
Yours, Mark Green

Yeah! Sensible, we hate 'em.

'ALL DONE BY MALES'

Dear AMIGA POWER,
After reading the guidelines on 'How to write a letter to AMIGA POWER', I felt able to write to you about something that I've been wondering for a while now, namely, why is the AP staff mostly male? And why are all the reviews done by males?

Please, don't get me wrong about this, being a female reader of your magazine, I'm not totally averse to the fact that, certainly in the issue concerned (AP 20) the male/female ratio is 5:1. But I do feel that it's just a little unfair. Now, I'm willing to admit that I'm not the world's greatest when it comes to playing computer games, but I can't help thinking that, surely, there must be females who are every bit as capable of playing, and reviewing, games as fairly as any one of the male staff.

Thanks for listening (or rather reading) and keep up the good work.
Yours faithfully,
Corrie Smith

We agree wholeheartedly – there must be plenty of women out there that could write for us. But when we advertise staff writer jobs they just don't apply, it's as simple as that. What can we do? We can't force girlies to work for us.

'WHAT ARE THEY PLAYING AT?'

Dear AMIGA POWER,
At the moment of writing this letter I'm annoyed not only with myself, but also with Commodore. About 2 months ago I purchased a new A600, at the time I had been led to believe by several magazines that the new A600 was the future of Amiga home computers.
How wrong.

Only a matter of weeks later the same magazines that had influenced my decision to buy my A600 inform me of the new A1200. You can imagine my shock, and probably that of many other unsuspecting A600 owners.

In my opinion this is highly unfair of Commodore. They obviously knew that they'd be in a position to release the A1200 when the A600 came out. My genius brain has also worked out that this is Commodore's third Amiga release in just over a year. What are they playing at? I'm not one to stand in the way of progress, but surely they should have given some warning of their proposals.

Now for another knock at Commodore. If they are so intent on making the CD ROM the multimedia of the future, what was wrong with offering a CD drive with the A600/A1200 packages. Okay, so a 20MB hard drive is cheaper to produce, but wouldn't this have been a wise step to make? According to Commodore's sales figures and predictions, I feel it would have been a great opportunity to increase the CD ROM's audience.

I've also heard that there will be a CDTV games console for under £200, is there any truth to this? Due to the high price of a CD ROM, I'd have thought this impossible. *(We haven't heard any solid info, but that's no great guide. – Ed)*

One question still on my mind is – Will there be a *Player Manager 2*? *Player Manager* was and still is the best management game ever.
Clifford Maxwell,Dalbeattie

There was supposed to be, but it's taking forever and there's no kind of date for it. Sorry, that's all we know.

'CABER TOSSERS'

Dear AMIGA POWER,
By now my name must be synonymous with 'unprintable' and 'prat' but actually this letter is a bit out of character, being serious to some degree. To be honest, this is a letter of complaint. Complaint at the position of your collective tongue in regard to mega-average *Sensible Soccer*. Complaint at your sudden weediness, displayed in apologising to Ocean and dropping 'Oh Dear.' Complaint at the appalling cover disks (Just how many crap *Sonic/Mario/Lemming* rip-offs am I going to have a demo level of before I throw away my Amiga and returning to my true love – the Spectrum? Bring back PD (the Hidden excepted) or get rid of the disk

DO THE write THING

FREE ADVICE winner

'WHAT'S THE USE OF A COMPUTER?'

Dear AMIGA POWER,
I have a dilemma. *(Great cars, them dilemmas. – Ed)*
Should I upgrade my A500 to a 1200 or the ST Falcon?

Now hang on, before you bin this letter, I know that AMIGA POWER relies on the well being of the Amiga, so for you to tell propose that the new ST was the machine to go for would be dumb and unlikely, but you are some of the most mature magazine people around so I'm trusting you not to be biased here, okey-dokey?

Now don't get me wrong, I'm not one of those 'get the best looking machine for the sake of flashing it around in a gittish sort of way' people... I would just like a good computer with a good future.

I was given a second hand Amiga way back in '88, and while I haven't spent as much time on it as some people I know do on theirs (ie 24 hours a day) I do appreciate it being there when I need it.

When it first came out people seemed to say 'Amiga? Pah! What's the use of a computer whose name means 'girlfriend' in Spanish? The ST's the one to go for, matey!' They seemed so sure of everything. After all, the new (in '87) Amiga did seem a bit of a white nelliphant. It had better game specs, but it cost a hundred quid more and had very few games on it when compared to the ST's vast range. However, today the Amiga is a star and those people who were so sure of themselves back then are now saying 'Ah, my ST seems to have died. Ahem, err...'

Now things are starting again, only this time the other way round. This time the ST's Falcon has better tech specs than the A1200, it costs an extra hundred quid and probably has fewer games being developed for it.

Does this mean that in four years time the Falcon will be THE machine? Perhaps it IS a crazy idea, but hey... who can tell in this crazy world of ours?

I would like to see both machines becoming just as popular as each other, the return of joint Amiga and ST mags and an end to all war... but perhaps I just have my head up my own bottom. So help me out AP, tell the whole nation what YOU think.
Yours, Joseph Shan, Yeovil

You're right, we're not exactly the most unbiased of people to ask, but let's take a look at what we've got here. For a start, the A1200 is compatible with a significant amount of existing Amiga software (Commodore claim 60%, which probably means about 40%, but that's still a good 1500-odd games), whereas the Falcon won't run any current games, be they ST or anything else.

Secondly, er... Damn, ran out of useful technical knowledge. Sorry, Joseph. Let's face it, the Falcon's from Atari, and they haven't exactly covered themselves in marketing glory in recent years, have they? The Falcon's a gamble – it might possibly catch on, or it might flop spectacularly. The A1200 is the nearest thing there is in this business to a guaranteed success – witness the huge sales already at the likes of the Future Entertainment Show – and that brings with it the guarantee of software support, and that's what makes a machine.

DO THE write THING

altogether. Oh and complaint at Scottish Nationalism in AP (Football the Scottish National game? In your dreams, caber tossers.)

Now I'm not one to complain at great length, and this letter is also full of compliments. Compliments for being quite funny. Compliments for – eh, well I'm not in a very constructive mood at the moment.

Yours destined for the bin,
Chris Denton, Notable Paranormal Investigator and ardent Spurs supporter.

What's the matter, Chris, get up on the right side of the bed this morning? We think Sensible Soccer *is brilliant, and the readers think it's the best game ever. Tongues haven't got anything to do with it. Scottish Nationalism? Well, one of our writers is Scottish, what do you expect? Rather that than gratuitous stereotyped racist abuse ('caber tossers'?), surely?*

'SWEDEN TROUNCED ME'

Dear AMIGA POWER,

Recently I bought one of those Amiga ROM sharers and I feel I must warn other people about them, as I am having a little trouble with mine.

It all started after I plugged it in and started to play *Troddlers*. I heard the pitter-patter of little feet and then my light went out. From the light of the monitor I could see many small creatures in cycle helmets running around my ceilings and walls. Naturally I called in Rent-O-Kill who pronounced them as Bloody Large Cockroaches and killed them all off for me.

However it didn't stop there. I went on to play *Sensible Soccer* – I was England, and not being very good, Sweden trounced me. Eerie, eh? I should have realised, but I didn't. Instead I felt the urge to play *Balance of Power*, but got fed up after I started a war in the Middle East and Yugoslavia erupted into internecine warfare. However, I did get all my hostages freed from Beirut before getting a bit fed up.

The pattern was beginning to emerge. I must now admit that it was I who crashed the Israeli Aeroplane into the Amsterdam tower block while playing with *A320 Airbus*. It was also I who caused the break-up of the Soviet Union by playing *KGB*. I got shot down during the desert conflict scenario on *Tornado*. While playing *PP Hammer* the Berlin Wall fell down. And while playing *Silent Service* I lost control off the coast of Norway, and we all know the disastrous event that caused. *SimEarth* led to the earthquake in Cairo and the hurricane in Miami – I turned that game off quickly.

And only a couple of days ago, I slid the sexy *Dyna Blaster* into the slot on the side of the computer, and somebody bombed half of Salford's telephone lines. And before that there was the incident on *Formula One Grand Prix* when my wheel fell off – at exactly the same time as Nigel Mansell's. And while on the subject of sport, Turkey (!) beat me in the medal table of *Olympiad-92*. Oh the shame of being the world's downfall.

And I must humbly confess that while playing with my *Music X* program, Kylie Minogue released "I Should Be So Lucky". and while using *Kind Words* the Sunday Sport became the Daily Sport. Yes, I was responsible for these horrendous events which seem to plague us. And I got thoroughly depressed playing *Back To The Future 2*, but doesn't everyone?

However, I put it all down as coincidence and thus got my just desserts. I loaded *Epic*. Oh how I wish I had never bought that game (as do many others I feel) for I am writing this letter from Command Ship Battle-Axe, about to join in an intergalactic war which is very reminiscent of Battlestar Galactica, my Wing Commander is actually called Star Buck. Anyway, the Red Alert has just gone so I have to go and blow up some green skinned reptiles. Thank God I had an Amiga 500 instead of the A600, I don't know what I'd do without the Enter Key.

Yours dementedly, Iain "Maverick-9" Benson

Get some help, Iain. Quickly.

'I KNOW LITTLE'

Dear AMIGA POWER,

HELP! If I don't speak to someone about this that doesn't own a games console I'm going to go nuts and buy one of the ruddy things just so I know what they're on about. I'm stuck in the dilemma of 'What games should I get for Christmas?' like many other children my age. Well, I know that I'm getting *Street Fighter II* but the second game I'm not sure about. I've had many sleepless nights turning it over in my mind. I've given consideration to many games such as *Sensible Soccer*, *Formula One Grand Prix*, *Lemmings 2*, *Road Rash* and *John Madden Football*. It's really getting to me. If I didn't own *Kick Off 1* (one!) I wouldn't have second thoughts about getting *Sensible Soccer*, but I do so I don't see the point. *Formula One Grand Prix* is too expensive and I already own *Lemmings 1*. Stuart Campbell gave *Road Rash* a rubbishy rating so cross that one off the list and I know little about *John Madden Football*. Is it just that every game has a flaw, or maybe I'm being too picky, or is it that all games are alike? You're the experts, please help a distressed little 12 year-old who's tired of being told that Sega Mega Drive games are the greatest and the Amiga sucks. I need something to prove them wrong. Help, I need advice.

Yours sleeplessly Adam Turtle

Easy-peasy, Adam. Sensible Soccer *is a million times better than* Kick Off, *and better than any of the others you mention, and just available in a new, improved version, so get that. It's the best game ever, doncha know? Next!*

'UPPER CLASS TWITS'

Dear AMIGA POWER,

Having read your (truly excellent) magazine I found myself 'flicking' through teletext. I began looking at the letters pages, you know the ones, where total dimwits and middle to upper class twits write in and talk about some obscure TV documentary about wardrobes and their effect on 19th Century social life or something. Having read one letter which claimed that 'the best 'real life' dramas on TV are the Bill, Casualty and London's Burning'. The writer went on 'why not combine all three for a feature length drama?', and apparently meant repeat three hours of drama without a break. The illustrious scribbler commented that it 'would be great as a one off thing for a bank holiday' (splutter! cough! ahem!)

You may be wondering what this has to do with you a computer magazine (just to remind you). However before this letter is scrumpled up and delicately placed in your waste paper basket, I just thought I ought to tell you who our writer was. His name was one "Stuart N. Hardy, Wales, Sheffield"!!!

This means that I can get on to my main point of writing, the price of your magazine. It is a little too high. Perhaps you could justify the price by giving away Stuart N Hardy photographs, which your readers could attach to a convenient dart board. I'm sure that the aiming practice would help Amiga owners with their coordination, helping them to get better at *Rainbow Islands* (which I don't like, but it's your magazine and you should state whatever opinions you like).

AND ANOTHER THING!!! Should this letter get printed, a message to Renegade Software:

"Oi you! You've had my *Sensible Soccer* and £4.95 for about a month now. Please get a move on?"

Thanks for reading this crap, AJ Sambrook

Are you listening, Stuart? You can't put it off any longer. Get that life.

SOOTHING SMILE winner

'FRUSTRATION CREEPS IN IMMENSELY BECAUSE I HAD TO WAIT'

Dear AMIGA POWER,

Let me take you on a trip to the 'Frustration Zone' (for want of a better term).

There has recently started, I've found, a strange phenomenon where games come out and receive (generally) universal acclaim from magazine reviews and I rush out and but them to find out within days that they're not quite the classics heralded. This is where the said zone appears for no matter how hard I try, as you yourself have said, the fancy graphics and sound cannot make up for severe difficulty curves or lack of.

Two examples of this:

Project X where (AMIGA POWER excepted) everyone rated the game as a classic shoot-'em-up. I bought the game, played it, found it to be beautifully designed as I've come to expect from Team 17, but absolutely impossible much beyond the middle of level two causing the aforementioned frustration zone. Fine, you may say, should have read our review, but how can at least three other mags have failed to notice this flaw?

Secondly comes *Putty*, a game that everyone, including yourself, rated highly. I bought this game the day it was released, found it to be, again, a superbly set up project with excellent graphics and humour within. Yet (and it's a big one) I completed the game on my third attempt, on my fourth go I did it without using a continue. Now again frustration creeps in immensely because I had waited longer for the game to arrive in the shops than I did to complete it. This feeling was further compounded when I wrote to System 3 detailing my feelings and asking about data disks with no reply. I again have to wonder how no magazine reviewers, many of whom are obviously much better games players than myself, ever noticed this problem and further still, two months on it still hasn't been acknowledged anywhere.

Now I don't want to sound totally negative, as obviously this problem is more the exception than the rule, but it hopefully gives you a new topic for discussion and it also adds fuel to the ideas mentioned before about either printing follow up comments some months on or for printing of readers reviews/comments.

Phew, thank you for taking time to wade through this and try not to be too sarcastic with me if you make a reply.

Yours sincerely, S Podmore

Well, we can't comment on anyone else's review of Project X, *beyond saying that if you don't review the finished version of a game, you're obviously going to make mistakes...*

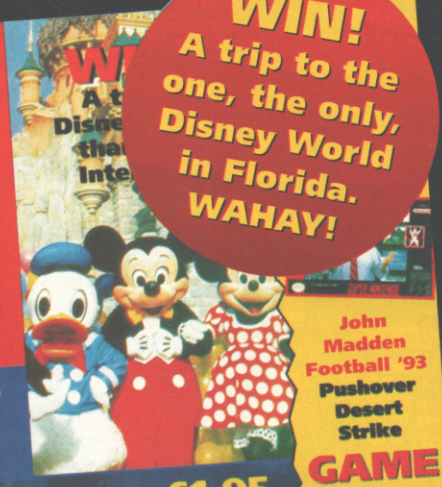
As for Putty, *we've had a few letters in a similar vein, and we hold our hands up – we should have made more of the game's relative easiness, although I have to say none of us really noticed it at the time – maybe we're all just crap* Putty *players and that's that. All the same, I think it's such a good game that it still justifies a very high mark, simply for the enormous fun factor. If it makes you feel any better, the word is that there will be some data disks next year, and we'll bring you more concrete info as and when.*

Yo! Mickey Mouse in the house!

TOTAL!

100% FOR PLAYERS OF NINTENDO

- Super NES
- Game Boy
- NES



WIN! A trip to the one, the only, Disney World in Florida. WAHAY!

January 1993 Issue 13 £1.95

The independent Nintendo mag from Future Publishing

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Pushover
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GAME BOY!

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Terminator 2
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THE BOTTOM LINE

12 months is a mighty long time in the world of Amiga games. That's where our world famous The Bottom Line comes in – by providing you with a comprehsive guide to a whole year's worth of game releases.

THE BOTTOM LINE
(AND HOW TO UNDERSTAND IT)

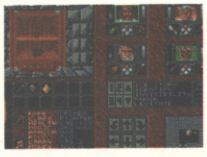
★★★★★ Excellent ★★★★★ Nearly there ★★★★ Very good
★★★ Has its moments ★★ Flawed ★ Dire

The whole point of the Bottom Line is to cram as much information as possible into this small space. Here's how it works...
The top bit is easy:
GAME NAME
Publisher Price

Then we get (just for your information really) the issue of AMIGA POWER in which the game was originally reviewed, the mark it got at the time and the reviewer's initials. If the game appeared in our new, updated All-time Top 100 Games, its position comes next, followed by the mini-review and a rating out of five stars (with red ones for real 'must buys'.) And there you have it – all you could ever possibly need to know about just about every full price game you're even slightly likely to think about buying.

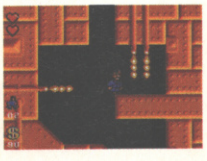
WHO'S WHO AP – Adam Peters ● DG - Dave Golder ● GP - Gary Penn ● JD - Jonathan Davies ● KF - Karl Foster ● LB – Linda Barker ● LE – Les Ellis ● MB - Matt Bielby ● MR - Mark Ramshaw ● MS - Matthew Squires ● MW - Mark Winstanley ● NW - Neil West ● RL – Richard Longhurst ● RP - Rich Pelley ● RR – Ronnie Randall ● SC - Stuart Campbell ● TN - Tim Norris ● TT - Tim Tucker

ABANDONED PLACES
Electronic Zoo £29.99



AP11 80% KF
Definitely one of the biggest RPGs you'll ever play, but as you might expect, that means an awful lot of fiddling about with disks. It looks a bit tacky too, but you certainly get plenty of game for your money. ★★★★

THE ADDAMS FAMILY
Ocean £25.99



AP14 88% MB
Highly simplified *Mario* clone, but no less playable for all that. Huge and tough, and while it looks a bit bare in places, there's no shortage of things going on. A goody for sure. ★★★★★

ADVANTAGE TENNIS
Infogrames £25.99
AP12 69% DG
We're still waiting for the definitive Amiga tennis game. This is up there with the best of the contenders, but poor controls let it down. ★★★

THE ADVENTURES OF WILLY BEAMISH
Sierra £34.99
AP12 69% MR
Great plot with some genuinely funny touches of humour, but the game itself is straightforward and linear. For £35, it's a bit short on depth to justify buying. ★★★

AGONY
Psygnosis £25.99

AP13 78% SC
The mellowest shoot-'em-up around, with stunning graphics, beautiful animation and relaxed, blissed-out gameplay (but utterly tragic music). The six levels won't take you all that long to get through, though, so think carefully if you're after a real challenge. ★★★★

AIR BUCKS
Impressions £29.99
AP17 70% MR
Fighting for supremacy of the skies can be a messy business, especially when it's peacetime and you run a commercial airline. This is an intriguing and engrossing business sim but you need to make too many allowances for sloppy programming for it to be 'fun'. ★★★

AIR SUPPORT
Psygnosis £25.99
AP19 55% RL
Uninspired and a chore to play, *Air Support* misses the mark as a strategy game *and* a 3D blaster. It's a nice idea to combine two genres but it falls short when all the good bits are missed out. It's a sad, bad game, which is a pity. ★★★

ALCATRAZ
Infogrames £25.99
AP13 73% NW
A bit of a pain in one-player mode (you have to play two characters simultaneously), but much more fun with a chum around, this maze game/shoot-'em-up is atmospheric and addictive, if not the biggest thing you'll ever see. Not bad. ★★★

AMERICAN FOOTBALL COACH
Composer Software £14.95
AP14 21% NW
John Madden Football without the groovy graphics, exciting strategy/arcade blend, competent programming and pretty much everything else. ★

ANOTHER WORLD
US Gold £25.99
AP10 89% MR T100 No.20
Okay, so you'll finish it in a couple of days, but this is absolutely gorgeous stuff, playable and different with an atmosphere all its own. Every new screen is an exciting discovery, and while quantity may be lacking, there's no doubting this one's quality. Let's hope for a (bigger) sequel. ★★★★★

APIDYA
Play Byte £25.99

AP13 89% MR T100 No.25
We can't agree whether this is the best Amiga horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up ever or only the second-best (its rival is the terminally cool *R-Type 2*), but it's definitely completely excellent, so why are you reading this instead of going out to the shops to buy it right now? Eh? ★★★★★

AQUATIC GAMES
Millennium £25.99

AP19 60% SC
James Pond's latest adventure sees him competing in the underwater Olympics. It's one of those joystick waggler games that gets horribly boring and repetitive very quickly. It does look very cute but we think we'll wait for *James Pond IV*. ★★★

AQUAVENTURA
Psygnosis £25.99
AP16 38% AP
Over-hyped, nice-looking but repetitive and shallow 3D shoot-'em-up. Okay as an ambient relaxation tool but if that's what you're after, try fitting a coloured light bulb. ★★

ASHES OF EMPIRE
Mirage £34.99

AP16 80% RL
Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to bring peace and stability to the Confederation of Syndicalist Republics (a not very well disguised USSR/CIS sort of place). *Ashes* is one of those strategy role-playing games that people tend to be scared of, but despite being vast and complicated, it's surprisingly easy to get into and curiously addictive. ★★★★

ASSASSIN
Team 17 £25.99
AP19 89% MS
Overall a great game. Nothing really to drag it down except perhaps a lack of originality. It looks great, it's chock-full of features and entertaining baddies and it's fairly simple to control. This is how most arcade conversions should look, but don't. ★★★★

A320 AIRBUS
Thalion £29.99
AP13 66% DG
You know how people say that if you want to play arcade games, you must have a console? Horrific image-wrecking trainspotter guff like this is the reason why. If you want to fly, go in a plane, don't buy an Amiga. 'Realistic'? Well maybe, but who cares? ★

BACKGAMMON ROYALE
Oxford Softworks £19.99
AP12 45% JD
Too thin a game to justify this price, and no use as a learning tool thanks to the horrible, confusing instruction manual. Buy a real Backgammon set and a decent book on the subject, it's better and cheaper. ★

BATTLE ISLE SCENARIO DISK ONE
Ubi Soft £19.99
AP18 78% MR
As data disks go this one is good value for money. *Battle Isle* fans, this is the place to come for lots more scenarios and lots more playing time. ★★★

BAT II
Ubi Soft £30.99
AP19 80% RL
With so many different styles of gameplay in here it could have been a real mess but the strategy and 3D elements combine really well with the adventure and RPG to give a cracking game. An unusual hybrid that works well. Nice one. ★★★★

BC KID
Ubi Soft, £25.99

AP19 89% GP
Supercute platform beat-'em-up, brimming with style, character and humour. Very playable and very lovable. ★★★★★

BIG RUN
Storm £25.99
AP11 61% DG
With *Lotus II*, *Vroom*, and *Lotus I* on budget, do you really need this third-rate conversion of a second-rate arcade driving game? No, we didn't think so. ★★

BILL'S TOMATO GAME
Psygnosis £29.99
AP 21 81% TT
Bill wrote it, Terry and Tracy Tomato star in it and you play it. Totally bizarre and thoroughly original gameplay gets you to propel a tomato across the screen using fans, trampolines and jack-in-the-boxes. With a hundred levels involving all sorts of puzzles, this will keep you going for ages. ★★★★★

BLACK CRYPT
Electronic Arts £25.99
AP11 85% GP
Real RPG devotees don't seem to go for it – preferring the likes of the *Beholder* games, but there appears to be something about this one which draws in the uninitiated. It's nothing new, but give it a try – you might like it... ★★★

BOROBODUR
Thalamus £25.99
AP11 34% SC
Really awful platform game, tied onto reasonably neat driving section which isn't good enough to suffer the horrors before it for. Really badly programmed too. ★

BRIDES OF DRACULA
Gonzo Games £25.99
AP13 59% MS
Astoundingly crude technically, the execution and some elementary design flaws ruin what might have been some top *Spy vs Spy*-esque vampire antics. ★

BUG BOMBER
DMI £25.99

AP17 83% SC
Er, well basically it's *Dyna Blaster* with twiddly bits. It's slightly better than *Dyna Blaster* as a one-player game but *DB* beats it for multi-player fun and good looks. Overall, though, dead fab. ★★★★

BUNNY BRICKS
Silmarils, £25.99
AP19 36% AP
Breakout meets baseball meets a bunny. Bad. ★

CAESAR
Impressions, £29.99

AP19 84% DG
Ruddy heck! At last, a halfway-decent wargame thing! Lots of strategy, good presentation, compelling gameplay. Generally, it's pretty good. Blimey. ★★★★

CALIFORNIA GAMES II
US Gold £25.99
AP18 52% RR
This will receive a fair recommendation when it arrives in the budget bin where it belongs. The only truly surprising thing about *California Games II* is the price. £25.99? Get real, dudes. ★★

CAMPAIGN
Empire, £34.99

AP19 83% JD
And here's another decent wargame. *Pacific Islands* meets, um, some other good war-type game. Strategy-tastic, and probably still a bit much for zapping fiends, bit a lovely game for anyone with the slightest beam of light creeping through the closed door of their mind. ★★★★

CARL LEWIS CHALLENGE
Psygnosis £25.99
AP17 83% DG
These days, sports sims of all descriptions come with a management section. This one does

but it isn't really worth playing. The sports bits are presented very well but are too easy. And there's no head-to-head option in multi-player mode. Okay, but flawed.
★★★

THE CASTLE OF DOCTOR BRAIN
Sierra £34.99

AP18 61% DG
If you want to expand your kids' minds then this is no bad way to go about it. It's just a pity that it's so damned slow and difficult to control. Not a very large game. ★★

CASTLES
Interplay £29.99
AP13 58% KF
Could-have-been-fun attempt at a *Sim City*-style epic with castles (surprise!) in it, but it's all too painfully slow and it doesn't even balance the lack of speed with any real depth or realism. ★★

CATCH 'EM
DMI £25.99

AP18 69% RP
If you enjoyed the totally bizarre concepts of *Lemmings* or *Gobliins* then perhaps you could make something of *Catch 'Em* too. Try it, you might like it. ★★★

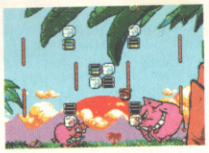
CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER
Domark £24.99
AP15 38% JD
A very tedious and boring attempt at the football management genre. There's absolutely no football action, but there is a ridiculous amount of disk accessing. Don't waste your money, you'd get more satisfaction flushing it down the toilet. Try Krysalis' *Graham Taylor Management* game instead. ★

CHESS CHAMPION 2175
Oxford Softworks £19.99
AP12 80% KF
Millions of options, loads of difficulty settings, easy to get into, good-looking and instructive, this is almost certainly the best Amiga chess game yet.
★★★★

CIVILIZATION
MicroProse £34.99

AP16 80% GP
The idea of god-sims, and this one in particular, is very appealing. Few of them really hit the mark, though, and this is one of those that just misses. The interface is a living nightmare of hell, but inside that shoddy body there beats a heart of gold. It's dull and flat to look at but in the end it's such a good idea. Okay if you're patient, but why should you have to be? ★★★

THE COOL CROC TWINS
Arcade Masters £25.99



AP16 65% MS
A mad and bizarre headbanging extravaganza of platforming crocodile antics. It's bright, colourful and arcadey, but there are too many levels and not enough gameplay variety to keep you entertained for very long. ★★★

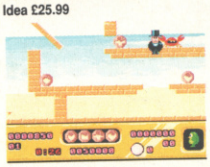
COOL WORLD
Ocean £25.99
AP 21 59% TT
Enjoyable platform game but flawed, clumsy character control being the main one. There's nothing special or original here, and the connection to the film is tenuous to say the least.
★★

COVER GIRL POKER
Emotional Pictures/Storm £25.99
AP13 6% MR
A completely amazing game. You'll be amazed at the poor-quality pictures, astounded by the tacky dialogue, and utterly staggered at how unbelievably bad it is at poker. If you own it, kill yourself. ★

CRAZY CARS 3
Titus £25.99

AP16 88% MR
Probably the best racing game yet – pure arcade fun. It succeeds. A great difficulty curve, excellent power-ups, wonderfully evocative graphics (Boston really looks like Boston) and great sounds. Let down slightly by the lack of a two-player option but otherwise fab.
★★★★★

CRAZY SEASONS
Idea £25.99



AP17 73% LB
Cutesy, platform puzzler featuring a pot-bellied penguin trying to save the universe. Not exceptionally original but very playable. ★★★★

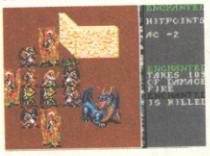
CRIME CITY
If... £25.99
AP11 30% GP
Nice detective murder-mystery idea, but useless plot development and unpleasant user interface. This could have been good, if only it had had a bit of atmosphere to it. ★

CURSE OF ENCHANTIA
Core Design £34.99
AP19 87% LE
A game that could well out-monkey *Monkey Island*. With such a high degree of humour this adventure is well on its way to becoming a classic. It's slightly overpriced and some of the puzzles are a little obscure but these are minor quibbles. Overall this a great game. ★★★★

CYBERBLAST
Innerprise Software Inc £25.99
AP17 61% GP
Uninspired *Gauntlet* clone. Scrolly, mazey, shooty thing that plays well but isn't overly interesting. ★★★

CYTRON
Psygnosis £29.99
AP 21 61% SC
Paradroid 90 done again, only not as well. A robot slides uncontrollably about a maze shooting up other robots and splitting up into two little robots occasionally. Lots other other options liven things up, but only for a few minutes. ★★

DARK QUEEN OF KRYNN
SSI £32.99



AP19 67% JD
Yet another Krynn game, just the same as every other Krynn game you've ever seen. (And if you've never seen one, they're primitive RPGs with ridiculous price tags and as much user-friendliness as a pit bull terrier with its tail caught in a door.) The graphics are a bit better than usual, though. ★★★

DELIVERANCE
21st Century Entertainment £25.99
AP14 75% JD
Cruder, more colourful version of *Gods*, without the depth but with a bit more zing to it. ★★★

D/GENERATION
Mindscape £19.95

AP16 88% JD
You wouldn't have thought you'd get much of a game out of being a dispatch rider in a genetic engineering lab, but Mindscape have managed it, and for only £19.95. It has elegant and perfectly balanced gameplay with just the right amount of puzzle-solving, shooting stuff, and leaping around. Not so hot in the sound effects or graphics departments but it packs an addictive punch that could easily knock a few teeth out. ★★★★★

DISCOVERY
Impressions £29.99
AP15 75% JD
Ships, history, and the anniversary of Columbus' 'discovery' of America. It's a pretty strange subject for a game, but then the American people have become a very strange sort of race. "Celebrate Columbus' anniversary on the Amiga". Quite. ★★★★

DOJO DAN
Europress Software £25.99

AP16 66% GP
A better than mediocre platform-romp-cum-beat-'em-up thang with some shoot-'em-up shenanigans thrown in for good measure. It can be frustrating to play at times but it can be moderately entertaining too. It's no classic but it has it's moments and is quite pretty to look at. ★★★

DOODLEBUG
Core Design £25.99
AP19 83% SC
Yet again the consoles are shown how cute platform games should be done. The controls are well thought out and even the pencil power-ups work really well. While it doesn't quite match up to *Zool* or the *Addams Family* it certainly gives them a run for their money. ★★★★

DREADNOUGHTS
Turcan Research Systems £34.95
AP14 80% JD
A naval strategy wargame that Jonathan liked? Nurse! ★★★★

DUNE
Virgin £30.99

AP15 81% DG
A highly polished adventure game which is more of a strategy game-cum-animated-book. It should appeal to adventure fans, and non-gaming fans of the book, alike. ★★★★

DUNGEON MASTER/CHAOS STRIKES BACK
Psygnosis £25.99
AP 21 81% AP
Standard RPG stuff packaged in a thoroughly playable and atmospheric package of two games. *Dungeon Master* is the old one, *Chaos Strikes Back* the newie, and you'll either love them or hate them both depending on your views on RPGs. ★★★

DYLAN DOG
Simulmondo £25.99
AP16 29% RP
There are loads of extras (graphics and sound) but there isn't really much of a game for them to be attached to. Weird, boring and expensive. Give it a miss. ★

DYNA BLASTER
Ubi Soft £30.99

AP12 83% MB T100 No.13
Good fun by itself, but play this in five-player mode (with the joystick adaptor included) and you'll find entire days disappearing from your life. If you've got any friends at all, this is an absolute must. ★★★★★

ELVIRA II: THE JAWS OF CEREBUS
Accolade £34.99
AP13 33% GP
Totally dull and unexciting (surely the very last thing a game about the larger-than-life Elvira should be) million-disk adventure, and shockingly priced. ★

EPIC
Ocean £30.99
AP15 34% KF
Put that wallet away. The only thing that's epic about this one is is how long we've had to wait for it. It scores on the graphics, and can be fun, but really – it's no game. ★

ESPAÑA GAMES '92
Ocean £29.99
AP17 38% MS
Huge variety of events but getting to them is a real chore. And they don't look too hot when you manage it. Not really worth the bother. ★

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS
Idea £25.99
AP17 4% SC
Our lowest ever mark. Nuff said? ★

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
Elite £25.99
AP16 59% SC
Having secured the rights to name the game after a famous tournament, you'd have thought Elite would have tried to simulate same. It doesn't look as if they did. As a footy game it's OK, but not up to the standard set by *Sensible Soccer* and *Striker*. Quite fun in a shallow arcadey sort of way but let down by poor graphics and slow play. ★★★

EUROPEAN FOOTBALL CHAMP
Domark £24.99
AP15 64% NW
A bog standard footy game. There was little chance of recreating the fancy graphics of the coin-op, so instead Domark have concentrated on keeping what gameplay there is up to scratch. A nice try, but it won't win the cup. ★★★

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER II
SSI/US Gold £35.99

AP14 86% KF
Nothing here that wasn't in the first (classic) game, but generally done that little bit better. Think very carefully before buying both. ★★★★

FASCINATION
Tomahawk £29.99

AP17 67% JD
Moderately groovy French adventure with a female central character. Nice and straightforward but tends to be a bit too linear. It looks great, too, although some of the scenes might trouble the less liberal-minded. Sexy or sexist? You decide. ★★★

FIRE AND ICE
Renegade £25.99

AP14 88% MR
Magic Pockets, but fast and good.
★★★★★

FIREFORCE
ICE, £25.99

AP19 56% SC
Green Beret for the '90s. The 1890s, that is. ★★

FIRETEAM 2200
Internecine £29.99
AP13 31% DG
Quite breathtakingly horrid-looking, and seriously dull to boot. Just another wargame, really. ★

FLOOR 13
Virgin £30.99
AP14 75% MS
Tense and atmospheric sim of a covert department of the secret service. Plausible, and wonderfully gripping, if a bit expensive side for a game with no colour or moving graphics. ★★★★

FOOTBALL CHAMP
Simulmondo £25.99
AP17 53% GP
Laudable effort, realism-wise. But if you want realism, what's wrong with real life? It's not very easy to get to grips with control-wise, and not particularly entertaining when you do. Football can be, and has been, done much better. ★★

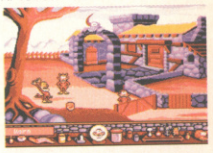
4D SPORTS DRIVING
Mindscape £25.99
AP11 69% NW
A quite neat *Race Drivin'* clone, somewhat spoiled by the really clumsy and thoughtless approach to disk swapping. ★★★

GLOBAL EFFECT
Millennium £29.99
AP13 60% JD
Sim City goes Green, but doesn't quite cut it gameplay and control interface-wise. Some very poor design logic makes it a chore. ★★

G-LOC R360
US Gold £25.99
AP18 7% LE
Possibly the most dismally programmed, boring and unimpressive piece of software we've ever seen. It's expensive, tacky, and rubbish. 'Nuff said. ★

GO
Oxford Softworks £19.99
AP12 80% SC
Unsophisticated but workable version of one of the true classics of boardgaming. 100 skill levels and a handicapping system gives everyone the chance to play this absorbing and challenging game. ★★★★

GOBLIINS
Tomahawk £25.99
AP16 79% MR



Whatever it is they give those French game designers, we'll have doubles. *Gobliins* is a quirky, not to say utterly weird, puzzler in typical Gallic style. The characters are irredeemably stupid but you'll love them just the same. Not exactly *Another World* but better than *Pushover*. ★★★★

GOBLIINS 2
Coktel Vision £29.99
AP 21 78% MW
It's more fun to watch than most cartoons on TV today, and scores highly in the fun and humour departments. The graphics and sound are wonderful too, but puzzles that are unbelievably contrived and a few annoying gameplay glitches can make this adventure tiresome at times. Well worth a go. ★★★★

GRAHAM TAYLOR'S SOCCER CHALLENGE
Krisalis £25.99

AP16 82% AP
Poor old Graham gets a lot of stick these days and there are many that would say he deserves it. Apparently he was involved in the development of this football manager sim and, if that's the case, his detractors will

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have to give him some grudging credit for a job well done. It's a game stuffed full of features, with some quite entertaining action scenes thrown in. Some niggling flaws but overall quite satisfying. ★★★★

GUY SPY
ReadySoft £29.99
AP17 33% AP
Oh dear, if only looks were everything. This is another one of those cartoony adventure things that looks fabulous but isn't actually much fun to play. It's a step in the right direction, just not a very big one. ★

HARE RAISING HAVOC
Disney £25.99
AP12 28%SC/68% MR
And those cartoon games just keep on coming. *Hare Raising Havoc* takes a more interactive route than most. It sure looks and sounds nice, but there's about as much gameplay in here as there is in a big empty box marked 'Gameplay-Free Zone'. It's quite funny but you'll never play it more than once. If you've got a hard drive (and you can't play this any other way), don't waste its memory space. ★

HARLEQUIN
Gremlin £25.99

AP11 91% SC T100 No.15
One of the most complete, entertaining, addictive and imaginative games of any kind ever seen on the Amiga, *Harlequin* is a tour de force of programming and design. It's the game *Robocod* should have been. Platforms and spacehoppers have never been so much fun. ★★★★★

HARPOON (WITH BATTLESET II)
Electronic Arts £34.99
AP11 64% JD
Phenomenally detailed, but you'll have to be a retired Admiral to have enough time on your hands to play it properly. ★★

HEARTS OF CHINA
Sierra £34.99
AP10 84% MR
Lots better than most Sierra efforts, but still very linear, and if you haven't got one meg and a hard drive, forget it completely. ★★★★

HOI
Hollyware £25.99

AP17 60% GP
Hoi, you see, is a dinosaur that looks like a fish on wheels. He's the star of a jolly platform romp that's funny in parts, but too difficult to really be 'fun'. There's better stuff around if you like this sort of thing. ★★★

HOOK
Ocean £25.99

AP15 84% MR
The atmosphere of Spielberg's Hook movie is nicely captured, but there isn't really all that much to it. It's small and shallow, but still jolly nicely formed.★★★★

HOSTILE BREED
Palace £25.99
AP15 82% MR
Brave, different, and mostly successful attempt to add intelligence to the shoot-'em-up. Sadly it's the shoot-'em-up bit that lets the side down. A little more attention should have been given to the arcade side of things. ★★★★

HOT RUBBER
Palace £25.99
AP14 50% GP
Take-it-or-leave-it motorbike racer that looks pretty sad next to *Vroom* and *Super Hang-On*. ★★

HUMANS
Mirage, £25.99

AP19 70% DG
Nice idea behind this puzzley thing, but it's too dull and slow to keep your interest for very long, and the horrible controls don't help. ★★★

IAN BOTHAM'S CRICKET
Celebrity Software £25.99
AP16 41% AP
Even if you're a fan of cricket, you have to admit that it can sometimes be a bit boring. *Ian Botham's Cricket* is tedious no matter what you think of the real thing. Livens up a bit as a two player game but overall it's a bit of a duffer. ★★

INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS

LucasArts & US Gold £34.99
AP 21 90% GP
Graphic adventure in the same vein as *Monkey Island*, with depth and story surpassing even the films at times. Brilliant in every respect except one – the amount of disk swapping renders the game almost unplayable, but it's almost worth buying a hard disk just for this. ★★★★★

INDY HEAT
Storm £25.99
AP11 63% SC
A very good conversion of the arcade game, but it's far too easy and it lacks the addictive life of *Super Off Road*. Excellent fun with a couple of friends round all the same though. ★★★

INTERNATIONAL SPORTS CHALLENGE
Empire £29.99
AP16 78% MR
Being Olympics year, 1992 was bound to spawn a few sports sims. This one features swimming, diving, cycling, show jumping, skeet shooting, and a marathon. It has its fair share of joystick waggling (on the swimming and cycling) but the other events make up for it with fun gameplay and the graphics are decent enough. Not brilliant, but good enough if you have a few friends round on a rainy afternoon. ★★★

ISHAR
Silmarils £29.99
AP15 78% KF
An atmospheric experience with a good many thoughtful and original touches to set it apart from the rest of the RPG field. The only problem is that it's possible to stumble around aimlessly for a fair old time before getting into the real meat of the action. ★★★

JAGUAR XJ220
Core Design £25.99
AP15 85% JD
Sadly this game hasn't improved on *Lotus II*, with a lack of driving excitement and cars on the road being two major problems. On the other hand it does have a lap rather than course structure, excellent weather effects and a track editor. Among the better of the sprite based driving games, but *Crazy Cars III* is now the firm office favourite. ★★★

JIM POWER
Loriciel £25.99
AP15 78% MR
No ground breaker, but a smooth and silky (if slightly gaudy) platform shoot-'em-up effort – what it lacks in originality it more than makes up for in evidence of sheer effort and good design. Not at all bad.★★

JOHN BARNES EUROPEAN FOOTBALL
Krisalis £25.99
AP14 74% GP
A very similar game in play to *Manchester United Europe*, but the tiny area of pitch visible on screen cuts down the tactical scope dramatically, although it bumps the speed up significantly. Good fun, but shallow. ★★★

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL
Electronic Arts £25.99

AP11 90% NW T100 No.23
Limited entertainment with a single player, but one of the most involving, absorbing and hugely playable two-player games ever. Only for fans of the sport, though. ★★★★★

KGB
Virgin £30.99
AP 21 87% TN
An adventure game that steers well clear of the well worn 'might and magic' themes, and instead goes with a well researched contemporary approach. The atmospheric graphics and numerous characters give it depth, but the linear story line leaves little scope for exploration. ★★★★

LEANDER
Psygnosis £25.99

AP10 83% MR T100 No.56
Slick, smooth and highly professional platforming antics (and the hero wears a silly hat too) – a bit on the generic side, but no less enjoyable for that. Plenty of it too. ★★★★

LEEDS UNITED CHAMPIONS
CDS £25.99
AP 21 74% AP
No arcade action with this, it's a management sim all the way. It's easy to control, with loads of options, and although not the best football management game around, it's a lot better than the worst. It also suffers from being inextricably tied to Leeds United football team, which means that however good it is, there are some people who just aren't going to buy it. ★★★

LEGEND
Mindscape £30.99

AP14 91% KF
An RPG that's got everyone in the AMIGA POWER office playing it has to be something pretty special, and that's just what this is. Well-balanced and easy to get into, we can't think of a single serious flaw. ★★★★★

LEGEND OF KYRANDIA
Virgin, £35.99
AP19 89% LE
Gorgeous adventure with an excellent difficulty curve, although the nine (count 'em!) disks are a bit of a bummer. ★★★★★

LEISURE SUIT LARRY 5
Sierra £34.99
AP11 50% KF
The kind of thing that makes buying a Super NES suddenly seem like a really good idea. Inept, unfair, morally-dubious, and about as nice to look at as your average motorway pile-up. Face it, it's rubbish. ★

LEMMING DOUBLE PACK
Psygnosis £29.99

AP 21 80% TN
If you've never heard of this then where have you been all decade? The unavoidable all time classic game of rodent rescue packaged together with *Oh No! More Lemmings*, which is pretty much more of the same. Surely as many levels as you're ever going to want, but, given the age of these games, the high price seems a shame. ★★★★

LINKS
US Gold £37.99

AP16 70% MS
Links is easier to play than either *MicroProse Golf* or *PGA Tour Golf*. It looks absolutely fabulous and is an almost flawless golf sim. Its major fault (and it's a MAJOR fault) is that it's so slow that a three-toed sloth on mogadon would look like a champion sprinter by comparison. ★★★

LIVERPOOL THE COMPUTER GAME
Grandslam £25.99

AP16 65% SC
It's a football game and it's based on Liverpool FC. What more do you need to know? Oh alright then. It's easy to get into, but lacks any real depth. It looks Okay and has a lot of good ideas but overall it doesn't really make it. ★★★

LOCOMOTION
DMI £25.99
AP19 84 SC
It's so easy to grasp the basics and controls, the whole family will be able to join in. It's also a game that pushes your brain into overdrive. It's absorbing, addictive, admirable, and lots more besides. It's got a built in construction kit so you'll never get bored with it. What more could you want? ★★★★

LORDS OF TIME
Hollyware, £25.99
AP19 53% JD
Lifeless, lacklustre FRPG that's not so much run-of-the-mill as aimless-kind-of-stroll-of-the-mill. Nothing very much of anything. A vacuum. ★★

LOTUS III
Gremlin Graphics £25.99

AP18 74% MS
Crazy Cars 3 creams *Lotus III* for sheer speed and thrills, and the much-vaunted course designer doesn't give you much opportunity to design. It's no disgrace but the time of *Lotus* has passed. ★★★

LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS
Revolution £30.99

AP15 88% MS
Not nearly as big as *Monkey Island 2*, but it's seven quid cheaper and has a lot fewer disks (and, for the xenophobes among you, it's British). It doesn't contain as much humour as *MI2*, but if you prefer the slightly more serious approach to adventures you'll love it . You won't be disappointed. ★★★★★

McDONALD LAND
Virgin, £25.99

AP19 67% JD
Uninspiring 8-bitty NES-y formula platform thing that's not actually terrible or anything like that, just depressingly mediocre. ★★★

MADDOG WILLIAMS
Game Crafters £30.99
AP12 47% JD
Stupendously run-of-the-mill Sierra-game clone that's more 'average' than actual 'crap' – but why not blow your £31 on something that's actually 'good'? ★★

THE MANAGER
US Gold £25.99
AP14 36% SC
Everything that's tedious and inept about football management games can be found in this hopeless pile of old crap. A million statistic screens and incomprehensible icons make *The Manager* knuckle-chewingly painful to play, with no redeeming features at all. Avoid desperately. ★

MATCH OF THE DAY
Zeppelin £25.99
AP19 51% AP
With a user interface that drives you nuts, *Match* comes in as a very bad management sim. It's too fiddly and lacking in action to match up to *Graeme Taylor's* and is mediocre at best. Everything about it says "Go for one of the other management sims". ★★

THE MED CONFLICT – BATTLESET 3
Electronic Arts £14.99
AP12 65% JD
Oh, please. This is such a specialist naval wargamer's thing that we seriously doubt a single one of our readers is in the slightest bit interested in it. Prove us wrong (all you Village People fans). ★★

MEGAFORTRESS
Mindscape £30.99

AP16 82% RL
Pull on that battered leather flying jacket, polish up your Ray-Ban Aviators and be the pilot of a B-52. At first glance it could be a bit of a techie nightmare, but it's surprisingly entertaining. The wide variety of tasks and enthralling atmosphere will keep you glued to the screen but the lack of ground detail loses the game a few marks. Atmospheric strategy flight-sim. ★★★★

MEGATRAVELLER 2
Empire £29.99

AP16 60% AP
A positively massive sci-fi FRPG with everything including the kitchen sink. Great scope for independent exploration and 'doing your own thing'. *Megatraveller* was deep, the sequel is even deeper – it just doesn't have any water in it. There's a great game in there somewhere, but you're the one who has to hunt it out. For fans only. ★★★

MIGHT & MAGIC III
New World Computing £35.99

AP16 87% RP
If you've always thought you might like to get into FRPGs then this is as good a place to start as any. It's got auto-mapping; effective combat; big, deep realistic gameplay; and almost everything else you could ever want. The sound and animation aren't up to much but they never are. *M&M III* is a real sweetie. ★★★★

MILLE MIGLIA
Silmulmondo £25.99
AP15 53% MB
A slow, vintage car-style driving game dressed up in authenticity and nostalgia. Great for fans of the classic car, of dubious worth for the

rest of us. If you like fast driving games, forget this and go for *Crazy Cars 3*. ★★

MONKEY ISLAND 2
US Gold £37.99

AP15 90% GP
A worthy sequel – and to be a worthy sequel to the excellent *Monkey Island* takes some doing. Despite a few flaws, it's essential if you enjoyed the first game, with enough in the way of improvements and changes to keep you entertained and on your toes. ★★★★★

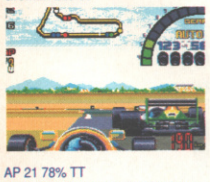
MOTORHEAD
Virgin £15.99

AP21 71% MW
Loads of hacking and slashing as you rock, roll and belch your way around the music biz. It's a horizontally scrolling beat-'em-up, and it's not particularly original, but it has a nice dose of humour and it's at a good price. Professional and fun, it's worth a look. ★★★

MYTH
System 3 £25.99
AP15 67% GP
System 3 get an 'A' for effort. *Myth* is a well-researched and, by and large, lively project with high-spots of gloss and variety. Unfortunately it lacks real depth, and some of the puzzle logic is crazy. ★★★

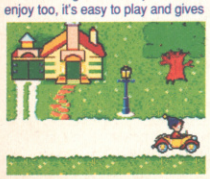
NICKY BOOM
Microids £25.99
AP21 50% GP
A standard fare scrolling platform game with nothing new to add. Almost suitable for younger players, but the big monsters are too hard, and hardened gamers will be bored by it. ★★

NIGEL MANSELL'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
Gremlin £29.99



AP 21 78% TT
It's a racing game, and no better or worse than many others on the market today. It's fun to play though, and the large number of courses and interesting background graphics should give it a long shelf life. The sound's a little weak, but it's a small complaint for such a good game. ★★★★

NODDY'S PLAYTIME
Jumping Bean Company £24.99
AP 21 75% RL
A children's game which parents will enjoy too, it's easy to play and gives



lots of learning opportunities. Lots of disk swapping makes it hard for kids to play on their own, but it is professionally done, highly enjoyable and should succeed in appealing to the younger children it's aimed at. ★★★

NO SECOND PRIZE
Thalion, £25.99

AP19 84% TN
Red Zone the way it should have been done – this is a corking motorbike racer with superfast and supersmooth vector graphics, and a great biking feel to boot. Very nice. ★★★★

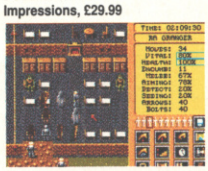
OPERATION COM-BAT
Merit Software £25.99
AP16 39% RP
It's a wargame and it's not very good. Okay? ★

ORK
Psygnosis £25.99
AP12 66% NW
This isn't a more complicated and less zappy version of *The Killing Game Show* at all – not! ★★★

PACIFIC ISLANDS
Empire £29.99
AP13 87% MR T100 No.63

Brilliantly exciting and tense tank sim that improves over its predecessor *Team Yankee* by a factor of four. A little complex for the arcade junkie, but fab all the same. ★★★★★

PALADIN II
Impressions, £29.99



AP19 61% LE
A strategy/RPG that's reasonably playable, but when you get into it you discover it's got no real substance whatsoever. Still, the construction kit extends the life a little bit. ★★★

PANZER BATTLES
Strategic Studies Group £25.99
AP12 62% JD
Quite bright and colourful, but suffers from Crap Indistinguishable Icon Disease. ★★

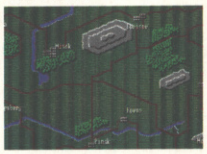
PAPERBOY 2
Mindscape £25.99
AP17 28% RP
If you want to be a paperboy, get a job delivering papers. ★

PARASOL STARS
Ocean £25.99

AP11 88% SC T100 No.18
Much more in the vein of *Bubble Bobble* than *Rainbow Islands*, this is a great all-action platformer with a particularly inspirational two-player mode. Not quite the same addictive pull as its immediate predecessor, though. ★★★★★

PGA GOLF COURSE DISK
Electronic Arts £14.99
AP11 75% RP
Some extra bits for one of the grooviest sports games ever – has to be a good thing, really. (Unless you're sick of it already.) ★★★

THE PERFECT GENERAL
Ubi Soft £34.99

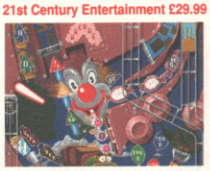


AP16 75% RP
Just when you thought it was safe to generalise about war games being dull, Ubi Soft manage to come up with one that's fun to play. Pitched about right for experienced players and beginners alike, we're convinced that *Perfect General* is a major contribution to something or other.★★★

PINBALL DREAMS
21st Century Entertainment £25.99

AP12 87% SC T100 No.78
'But it's only a pinball game'. Yeah, and a Ferrari F40's only a car, but what the hell's that got to do with anything? Supremely gorgeous and it'll last you a lifetime – what more could you possibly ask for? ★★★★★

PINBALL FANTASIES
21st Century Entertainment £29.99



AP19 89% SC
More brilliant pinballing action in the follow-up to the legendary *Pinball Dreams*, but it's a little less consistent than its predecessor and, scandalously, £5 more expensive. Still, the best table is astoundingly good, and practically worth the cash by itself. Pretty damn fab all round, but there's still enough room for improvement for someone to write the absolutely definitive Amiga pinball game. ★★★★★

PLAN NINE FROM OUTER SPACE
Gremlin Graphics £34.99
AP18 36% RL
Reasonably entertaining idea for a game, but the gameplay is disjointed, the music and sound effects are abysmal and it's too short. There are plenty of other things to blow 35 quid on. And just why does a game which includes a' free' video cost more than Gremlin's standard releases. ★★

POOL
Virgin £25.99
AP19 82% SC
The follow up to *Snooker* but with an improved control system and game engine. It's not all that different, but pool fans are bound to love it. It probably isn't worth buying if you already have *Snooker*, but if you don't then get this instead. ★★★★

POPULOUS II: THE CHALLENGE GAMES
Electronic Arts £14.99
AP 21 49% GP
Even at £15 this is too much to spend on what is basically an extras disk to the original game. 500 new worlds and 42 challenge games, but there's little that you couldn't do yourself with the custom game option. For *Populous* perverts only. ★★

POWERMONGER: WW1 EDITION
Electronic Arts £14.99
AP12 65% JD
Gives the original game a shot of much-needed character, but beyond that it doesn't really add anything to the original. ★★

PREMIERE
Core Design £30.99

AP17 84% MR
At last, a cartoony action game that's fun to play. It's a little bit basic, gameplay-wise, and the six levels are pretty similar, but it does manage to capture something of the excitement of movie studios. If Bruce Willis were a computer game, he'd probably be *Premiere*. ★★★★

PROJECT X
Team 17 £25.99
AP13 78% SC T100 No.82
We thought this was going to be a contender for game of the year, but we were wrong. Slick and brash and arcadey, but also bugged and dramatically under-playtested. A crying shame. ★★★

PROPHECY
Mirage £25.99
AP17 29% SC
Very, very like *Super Wonder Boy* only not as good. ★

PSYBORG
Loriciel £25.99
AP14 65% GP
Hyper-fast tunnel racer that's quite good fun when you get into it, but still miles too thin for a full-price product. ★★★

PUSHOVER
Ocean £25.99
AP14 79% MR
Not-entirely-unpleasant little puzzler, but relies rather more on trial-and-error than actually stretching your mental faculties to any serious degree. The best domino-toppling game on the Amiga, though. ★★★

PUTTY
System 3 £25.99

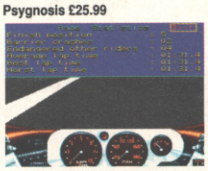
AP18 90% MR
One of the Amiga's finest and most utterly silly moments yet. The loading can be a bit of a pain but everything else (especially the sound and Uncle Ted) is wonderful. System 3 have pulled out all the stops on this one to give you more laughs for your money than any other game around. ★★★★★

RACE DRIVIN'
Domark £25.99
AP13 72% NW
A better effort than Domark's original *Hard Drivin'* conversion, but still uncomfortably prone to wildly over-sensitive control. Still, if you liked the arcade game you'll etc. ★★★★

RAMPART
Domark £25.99
AP 21 66% SC
Great fun in the two player mode, but spoiled by awkward and sluggish controls. It's overpriced for a conversion that isn't as good as either the original or other format versions. ★★

RED BARON
Dynamix £34.99
AP12 19% GP
On a few thousand quid's worth of PC kit this is a reasonably exciting WW1 flight sim. On the Amiga it's one of the crappiest bits of crappy old crap there's ever been. Only for those of you who find snails thrillingly fast. ★

RED ZONE
Psygnosis £25.99



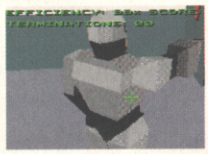
AP19 54% TN
The control on the bike is abysmal which doesn't help when you're careering round a track at 140mph. The graphics are not as smooth as they could be and combined with the controls make this a definite miss. ★★

RISKY WOODS
Electronic Arts £25.99
AP15 82% MS
Lacking variation and depth, *Risky Woods* does compensate with plenty of frenzied, and atmospheric platform action. On a par with *Leander*, it's a good buy for fans of the genre, but by no means a must. ★★★★

ROAD RASH
Electronic Arts, £25.99

AP19 70% SC
Brilliant conversion of the Mega Drive title, which unfortunately only serves to emphasise the thin-ness of the original game. Good fun, but very simplistic – you'd be a lot better off with *Crazy Cars 3*. ★★★

ROBOCOP 3
Ocean £25.99



AP10 85% MB T100 No.71
The most surprising film licence in ages, this really brings out the feel of the film (wherever it is), with lots of fast-paced action depicted in impressive solid 3D vectors, with lovely presentation into the bargain. It doesn't quite hang together as a real game, perhaps, but very brave, and a definite success. ★★★★★

ROBOSPORT
Ocean £29.99AP 21 64% RL
Sophisticated strategy/action game of robo-warfare. Plenty of scope for tactics, weaponry and good old blasting, but the disjointed gameplay and dull graphics make it less impressive than the 'thinking man's blaster' it tries to be. ★★

ROME AD 92
Millennium £25.99

AP19 59% LE
It's quite fun at first as the story unfolds and your quests start. The statics are nice and the whole thing seems like a good idea until you've played it for a long time. If only a little more were happening it would be a cracking little adventure. ★★★

RUBICON
21st Century Entertainment £25.99
AP13 74% RP
Bland horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up, too far behind the pack to be really worth buying at this price. Nice weapons, though. ★★★

SABRE TEAM
Krisalis £25.99

AP19 68% LE
Suffers dreadfully from a lack of speed. The storyline is sound and everything about the game suggests that it could be really good. If only it wasn't for that damn lack of speed. ★★★

SAMURAI: THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR
Impressions £29.99
AP14 55% AP
Good presentation, but when you get into the game proper it's just one more tacky and unfriendly wargame. One for ninja fetishists. ★★

SENSIBLE SOCCER
Renegade £25.99

AP15 93% SC
An unbelievably playable, fabulously realistic, and amazingly atmospheric football game. The best two player game available on the Amiga and probably one of the top two Amiga games of all time. Do yourself a favour – buy it! ★★★★★

SENSIBLE SOCCER 92/93 SEASON
Renegade £25.99 stand alone/£3.95 upgrade
AP 21 94% SC
The original was voted the best Amiga game ever by you readers, and this is even better. It's more realistic, there are red and yellow cards now, the goal keepers are better and the teams' skill levels have been tweaked, making the game tougher. Just about the best game in the world for the Amiga, so if you haven't already got it – 1. Why not? and 2. Get this one instead. ★★★★★

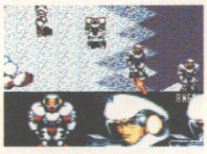
SHADOWLANDS
Domark £29.99

AP11 87% MR T100 No.49
Very lovely RPG with a neat light-and-darkness effect, which (despite the fact it does have some gameplay implications) is mainly just a cosmetic gimmick on top of what's a well-designed and absorbing game. Good stuff, though occasionally a tad sluggish. ★★★★

SHADOW OF THE BEAST III
Psygnosis £29.99

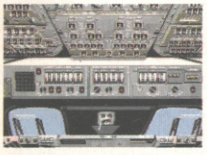
AP18 71% SC
A sweet game to play but you're not getting enough for your 30 quid. More fun than the other two *Beast* games and there's no free T-shirt (that's avery big plus, by the way). There's just not very much to it.
★★★

SHADOWORLDS
Krisalis £25.99



AP19 85% JD
Enormous fun to play, *Shadoworlds* has all the good elements of an RPG with none of the complexities. The lighting effects create a great atmosphere but sometimes the action gets a little ahead of the control system. Otherwise one hell of a game. ★★★★

SHUTTLE
Virgin £30.00



AP19 58% RL
It's taken two years to program, it's packed with detail, it's big and it's dull. It's no fun to play and the presentation is muddled. The constant disk accessing is a pain but fans of the genre will probably like it – but only because there is no other shuttle sim.
★★

SIM ANT
Ocean £34.99

AP14 59% MB
Some of the most appaling programming seen in a professional game in years ruins what could have been an interesting concept. Even if you've got a hard drive, forget it. ★

SIMEARTH
Ocean £34.99
AP17 41% JD
As a simulation of a living planet, it's spot on. The problem is that ecosystems are, by their very nature, slow, dull things and neither the presentation nor the interface do anything to make them more interesting.
★★

SPACE CRUSADE
Gremlin £25.99
AP12 85% KF T100 No.60
Excellent boardgame conversion which does away with all that faffing around with bits of plastic and dice, but doesn't lose any of the features of the original. Very classy. ★★★★

SPACE GUN
Ocean £25.99
AP12 69% MR
Zappy *Operation Thunderbolt* clone, but nowhere near as good. Fun with a Trojan Light Phaser, but not much else. ★★

SPOILS OF WAR
Internecine £29.99
AP14 45% JD
Tedious rubbish. There is no truth in the rumour that wargames have to be dull to be realistic. We've said it often enough by now, but just to reiterate – something being a wargame isn't an excuse for it being programmed to sub-1986 standards.
★

STARUSH
Ubi Soft £25.99
AP14 64% SC
Lots of nice touches in this zodiac-inspired blaster, but unfortunately they're not attached to a decent game. Not a rip-off, but not really worth buying either. ★★★

STEEL EMPIRE
Millennium £29.99
AP11 63% RP
There aren't many wargames set in the near future, but this is, er, one of them. It didn't set our hearts on fire, but being objective this is quite good. Only quite good, mind you... ★★★

STORM MASTER
Silmarils £25.99

AP11 86% MS T100 No.72
Another *Kingdoms* game, but there's lots more to do in this one than *Realms*, and there's more variation to the gameplay too. ★★★★

STRIKER
Rage £25.99
AP15 76% SC
Fast moving and immediately playable, but it's just a bit too sophisticated for its own good, proving very frustrating unless you select one of the top sides. It's a good game but at the end of the day *Striker* lacks the necessary polish to make it stand up to the sheer class of the all-conquering *Sensible Soccer*.
★★★

SUPER TETRIS
MicroProse £29.99
AP17 54% SC
Tetris with knobs on. But why? It's no better than *Super Twintris* and you can get that for nothing. ★★

SWORD OF HONOUR
DMI £25.99
AP18 28% LE
You spend longer waiting for the screens to load than you do playing them. Nothing original here, just a poor man's copy of *The Last Ninja*. Very slow and boring. ★

TENNIS CUP 2
Loriciel £25.99

AP17 72% MS
The control system is difficult to get to grips with at first, but, once mastered, it makes this one of the better tennis sims. Good looking with lots of options. All this and Inspector Clouseau announcing the scores, what more could you want? ★★★★

3D CONSTRUCTION KIT II
Domark £49.99

AP 21 80% JD
This is a games creation utility which gives you the power to put together your own 3D environments and make games out of them. This version gives you extra features not found on the first, like the ability to add sound effects, support for spheres and a disk full of clip art. It's quite hard to get into the programming, but it's still a lot easier than other languages and a neat way to get into creating 3D games. ★★★★

TINY SKWEEKS
Loriciel, £25.99

AP19 68% RL
Previously previewed as *The Brainies*, this is a sweet little puzzler which'll get your mind turning somersaults, but won't really get you excited enough to want to plough through all 101 levels. One of the better games in the genre, though.
★★★★

TITUS THE FOX
Titus £25.99

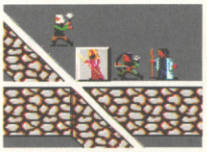
AP12 88% SC/MR T100 No.22
Hudson Hawk meets *The Blues Brothers*. Huge, wonderful platformer, dragged down a bit by huge amounts of disk accessing, but no less unmissable for all that. The cutest game hero in the known universe, too (nobody's based a game on Winona Ryder yet).
★★★★★

TOP BANANA
Hex £25.99

AP11 45% JD
Bizarre environmentally-friendly (both in concept and execution) *Rainbow Islands* clone, this is certainly one of the oddest games we've seen in a while. Unfortunately, while it's almost exactly the same game as *Rainbow Islands*, it's only about a tenth as good. ★★★

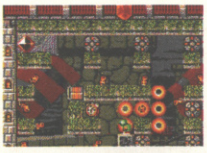
TOUCHDOWN
Strike Force £14.99
AP15 48% NW
Slick presentation keeps up the pace of a technically sound, if not particularly enthralling, coaching sim. All the basic features you'd expect, but gridiron fans deserve more action and a little more to excite the imagination. ★★

TREASURES OF THE SAVAGE FRONTIER
US Gold/SSI £32.99



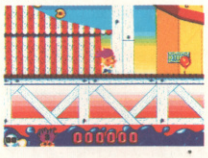
AP19 34% LE
An out-of-date RPG when compared to the likes of *EOTB* and *Storm Master*. It's slow with a disgusting amount of disk accessing and no hard drive installation option. It shows how an old formula can go stale when pushed too far, and this has been pushed too far. ★★

TRODDLERS
Storm £25.99



AP18 89% AP
The best elements of some of the best styles of gameplay in history combined in one cute package, and it works. Two styles combine to make a classic game in its own right. It's better than *Lemmings*, allegedly.
★★★★★

TROLLS
Flair £25.99

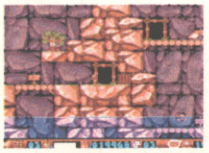


AP 21 83% MW
If bright, cute and cheerful platform type games are your thing then this has to be the one for you. Everything about this is so fluffy and nice that you want to hurl, and there really isn't really anything bad to say about it.
★★★★

TV SPORTS: BASEBALL
Mindscape £25.99
AP15 52% NW
Well put together, but very tedious after an hour or so. If you do want baseball on your Amiga then try the much better *RBI Two Baseball* instead. ★★

TV SPORTS BOXING
Mindscape, £14.99
AP19 56% AP
Well, it's the best job anyone's made of a boxing game so far. Sadly, it's still a boxing game, and it leaves a fair bit to be desired in the lasting-appeal department. ★★

UGH!
Play Byte £25.99



AP15 79% MR
A laugh and a half, *Ugh!* offers you excellent one or two player prehistoric fun, for a while at least. Not the sort of thing you'd be playing a year later, though, but worth a look.
★★★★

ULTIMA VI
Mindscape £30.99

AP13 90% MR T100 No.17
Not the kind of thing for RPG virgins to start on, or for anyone without a hard drive even to consider, but this is currently pretty much the state of the art for Amiga role-playing. Enough to keep you going for months. ★★★★★

UTOPIA: THE NEW WORLDS
Gremlin £14.99
AP14 60% SC
Er, some new worlds for *Utopia*. They're okay, really. Is it just us or is £15 a lot of money for a data disk?
★★★

VENGEANCE OF EXCALIBUR
Virgin £30.99
AP13 60% MS
Not 500+ compatible, which is outrageous. Otherwise, an attractive, but pretty average RPG romp which doesn't significantly improve on its unimpressive predecessor. ★★

VIDEOKID
Gremlin £25.99
AP11 70% SC
Mega Twins without the platforms. Okay, it's not all that similar – it just looks that way initially. This is a pretty, constantly scrolling shoot-'em-up, and quite good fun really.
★★★

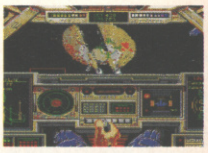
VIKINGS
Krisalis £25.99

AP16 81% MR
A strategy wargame thing that doesn't look ugly or contain too many statistics. It also has an easy-to-use interface. It's a bit like *Defender Of The Crown* without the action sequences but with some kind of magical addictive ingredient thrown in instead. And you can compete against your friends. ★★★★

VROOM
Ubi Soft £25.99
AP12 88% SC T100 No.35
The missing link between *F1GP* and *Lotus 2*, *Vroom* straddles two genres without falling between two stools. Great as a simple foot-down arcade game, but excellent fun as a serious tactical Formula One sim too. It's lovely and fast and you shouldn't be without.it. ★★★★★

WEEN
Coktel Vision, £29.99
AP19 81% LE
A bit on the overpriced side, and a bit titchy, but a nifty little puzzle-based adventure thing all the same. A brilliant control interface too, but the game needs a little more to it to qualify for classic status. ★★★★

WING COMMANDER
Mindscape £34.99
AP 21 55% MR
Everything that was on the original PC version is replicated here, which means that the standard Amiga is so bogged down with data that it runs hopelessly slow, far too slow to make it playable. On the A1200 though, the 3D sequences run fast and smooth, making this the benchmark game for future A1200 shoot-'em-ups. ★★★★ (for the ...A1200)

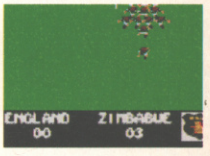


WINTER SUPERSPORTS 92
Flair £25.99
AP15 61% GP
A high price to pay for what boils down to four different events. None of them are particularly involving or compelling, but there's fun to be had when more than one player is involved. ★★★

WIZKID
Ocean £25.99

AP15 91% MR
A refreshing game that mixes psychedelic arcade adventure, football, and bad jokes with arcade games like *Breakout* and *Pengo*. With its perfect control system it's as much fun to play as it obviously was to write. The best game ever (beginning with the letter W at least) If you don't buy *Wizkid*, your life really will be a lot poorer.
★★★★★

WORLD CLASS RUGBY – THE FIVE NATIONS
Audiogenic £25.99



AP14 86% MS
Dramatically-improved version of the earlier game, right up there with *Rugby – The World Cup* for playability and action. The 3D second-person perspective view (a la *John Maddon Football*) is neat, too.
★★★★

ZOOL
Gremlin Graphics £25.99

AP18 90% LE
Rightly heralded as a *Sonic* beater. It's fast, tough and kicks the ass of certain other games featuring certain other characters. This is the yardstick by which other games will be measured.
★★★★★

ZYCONIX
Accolade, £24.99
AP19 63% LE
Decent mix of several puzzle-game standards (*Tetris*, *Columns*, *Klax*, you know the score), which doesn't really have enough character of its own to stand out from the crowd. All right, but unremarkable.
★★★

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AP RATED 90%

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1. 'A stiff paste made of whiting and linseed oil used to fix glass into frames and fill cracks in woodwork.'
2. 'One of the Amiga's most original and finest moments yet. Flexible and versatile, that's *Putty*.'

ASSASSIN
AP RATED 89%

Probably the most playable game of its genre. Take on mad pit bull terriers, evil hippies, rampaging robots and maniac chimps in this seriously excellent console-esque game. With five enormous levels, endless bonuses and collectables and a nasty dude called Midan, you've got your work cut out.

WIZKID
AP RATED 91%

A game with a bizarre, surreal sense of humour that can result in a serious scrambling of your brain. *Wizkid* is a psychedelic mix of arcade adventure, football, bad jokes and arcade classics like *Breakout* and *Pengo*. It's refreshingly original and more fun than a very amusing thing that's in an especially good mood.

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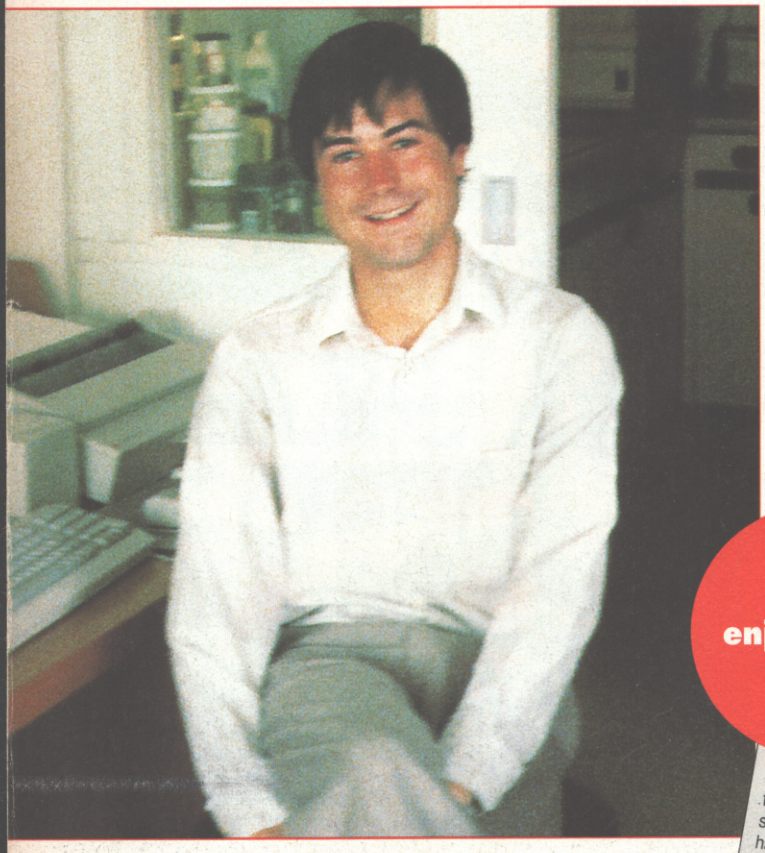

In the second of our occasional delvings into the murky minds of industry figures, we put a few impertinent questions to *Elite* author, David Braben.

What do you believe in?
You should behave towards others as you hope they would behave towards you.

What was the first thing you said today?
Oh God, it's not eight o'clock already?

Who's your favourite historical figure?
Sir William Stanier. *(Famous engineer and train-building gentleman. – Ed)*

What's your Number One object of desire?
Knowledge.

What have you got in your pockets?
Money, keys, handkerchief.

How do you rate your/your team's importance in the software biz (1-50)?
1.

"He enjoyed his life"

If you could be in a computer game, which one would it be?
Stupid question – *Frontier*, I suppose.

Is there anything or anyone you'd die for?
I don't think so.

Would you vote for the Maastricht treaty?
No, and I think it was dishonest the way the vote in the House Of Commons was handled.

Who's your favourite Doctor Who?
Jon Pertwee.

Are video games killing pop music?
No.

What would your autobiography be called?
It's Been Great, So Far.

What was the last book you read?
Memorable Shipwrecks Of The Nineteenth Century.

What's the nicest thing anyone's ever said to you?
Yes!

What one thing do you think would most improve the software industry?
Some originality.

What would you like your epitaph to be?
He enjoyed his life, and changed people's attitudes.

A Brief History Of David Braben, by David Braben

Between 1982 and 1985 I studied 'Natural Sciences' (Physics) at Cambridge University. In the final year I specialised in 'Electrical Sciences' which was largely electronics. Whilst at University, I wrote *Elite* with Ian Bell for the BBC Micro, and then for the Acorn Electron. This was released in September 1984 through Acornsoft, and sold 93,000 units before Christmas the same year. This provoked a good deal of interest in the game (including some six minutes on Channel 4 News), since only about 400,000 BBC Micros had been made by then, and many of these were in schools. *Elite* was then converted to the C64, Apple II, Spectrum and Amstrad CPC during 1985, and continued to do well. I then did my Final Exams, and got a 2(ii) BA (Hons).

In 1985-6 I attended a one year postgraduate Computer Science course, also at Cambridge University, with a view to doing a PhD on Computer Graphics. However I thought the course was fairly poor, and I've deferred this indefinitely.

After *Elite*, while doing the Computer Science course, I spent some time experimenting with 3D techniques. One of these projects resulted in a 3D tank game, but this was never released as I didn't think it was good enough. I also started writing the sequel to *Elite*, again with Ian Bell, but this was designed to run on the 8-bit machines, for which it was perhaps too ambitious, and also these were rapidly becoming outdated. Thus, although it was nearly complete, the project was abandoned in early 1987.

At about the same time I was given a prototype Acorn Archimedes computer, and wrote a series of demonstration programs for Acorn, including a ray-tracing program, culminating in the demonstration game *Lander* (given away free with the machine) and the commercially-released game *Zarch*. These games were written very quickly (three months from start to final completion) to a very rigid deadline (the launch of the machine at that year's PCW Show).

Due at the enormous acclaim *Zarch* received, it was converted to the Atari ST and Amiga in early 1988, and then the IBM PC, under the name of *Virus*. It received further acclaim on these more popular machines, including Game Of The Year 1988.

Since 1988 I've returned to *Elite II*, but with a completely new start and new design, this time without Ian Bell, although he has retained an interest in it. Much of this time has been spent experimenting with new 3D graphical techniques, apart from a brief interlude in early 1990 to port *Elite* to the NES, and as a by-product may be licensing the 3D graphical environment to third parties.

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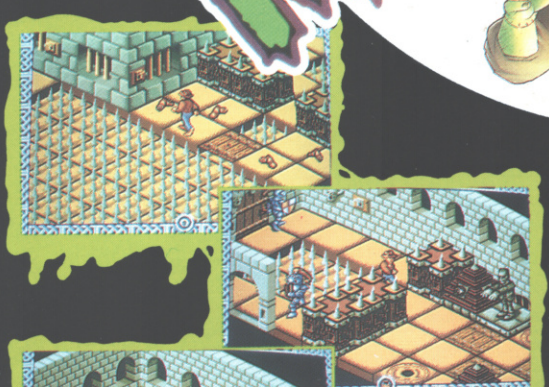

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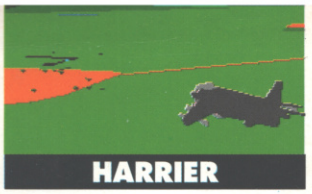

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